

2020 Point-in-Time (PIT) Count Report

Maricopa Regional Continuum of Care

What is the PIT Count?

The Point-in-Time (PIT) Homeless Count is an annual street and shelter count that determines the number of people experiencing homelessness in Maricopa County during a given point in time. Conducted on a single day in January, this project includes a brief survey to identify the needs and characteristics of those experiencing homelessness. Every Continuum of Care is required to submit PIT Count results to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as part of a national effort to identify the extent of homelessness across the country.

Why is it important?

The PIT Count is an important source of data on homelessness, and is reported to Congress as part of the Annual Homelessness Assessment Report (AHAR). The PIT Count is a primary source of unsheltered homeless numbers and helps to inform communities on the number of people who do not access services such as Emergency Shelters or Transitional Housing at any given point in time. As the unsheltered count in particular continues to rise across the region, increased regional efforts to address homelessness are necessary. Potential factors that may have contributed to the increase include: improvement in PIT Count volunteer training and recruitment, change in emergency shelter capacity, and rising housing costs in the region.

The PIT Count is a one-night snapshot of homelessness that is limited by weather conditions, number and training of volunteers, self-reported survey responses, and other factors. There are more people who experience homelessness over the course of the year than on any given single night. Every year, the Continuum of Care works towards improving the count's accuracy. The Maricopa Regional Continuum of Care is committed to using data from the PIT Count and the regional Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) to understand more about the population experiencing homelessness in the region and to provide solutions that will make homelessness rare, brief, and non-recurring.

Growth Rate from 2019-2020

Total PIT Count

+12%

Unsheltered Count

+18%

Sheltered Count

+7%

The unsheltered count increased at a **higher rate** than the sheltered and overall PIT Count.

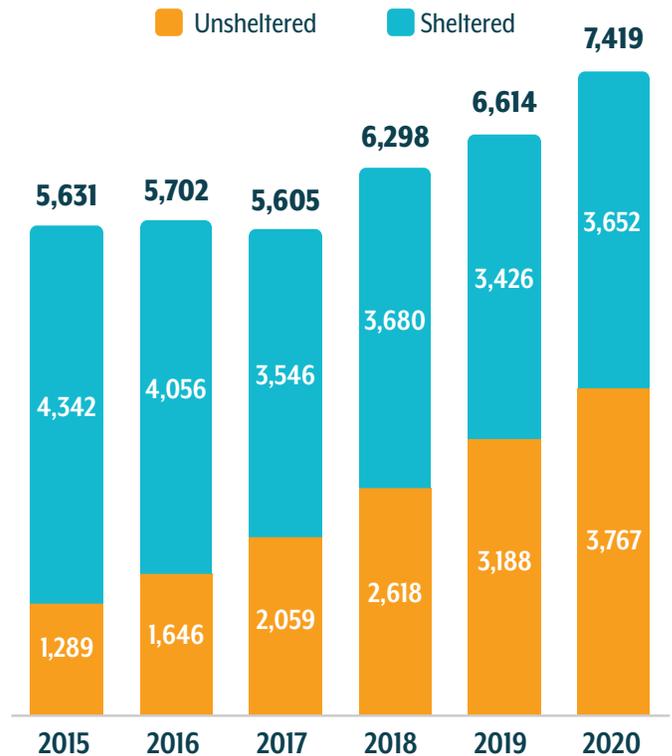
2020 PIT Count Total

7,419
people experiencing homelessness
in Maricopa County on the night of
January 27, 2020


49%
Sheltered
in Emergency Shelter,
Transitional Housing,
or Safe Haven Programs


51%
Unsheltered
on the streets or other
place not meant for
human habitation

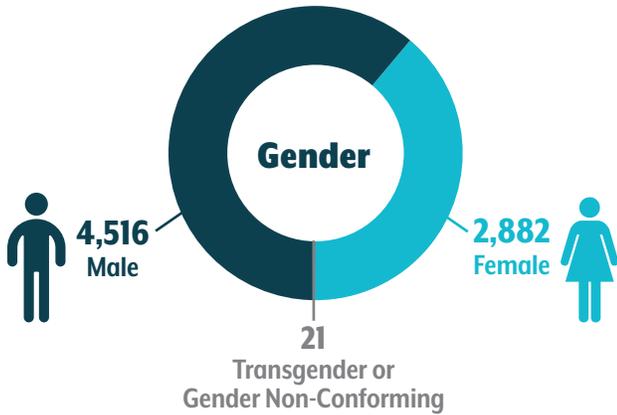
Total PIT Count, 2015-2020



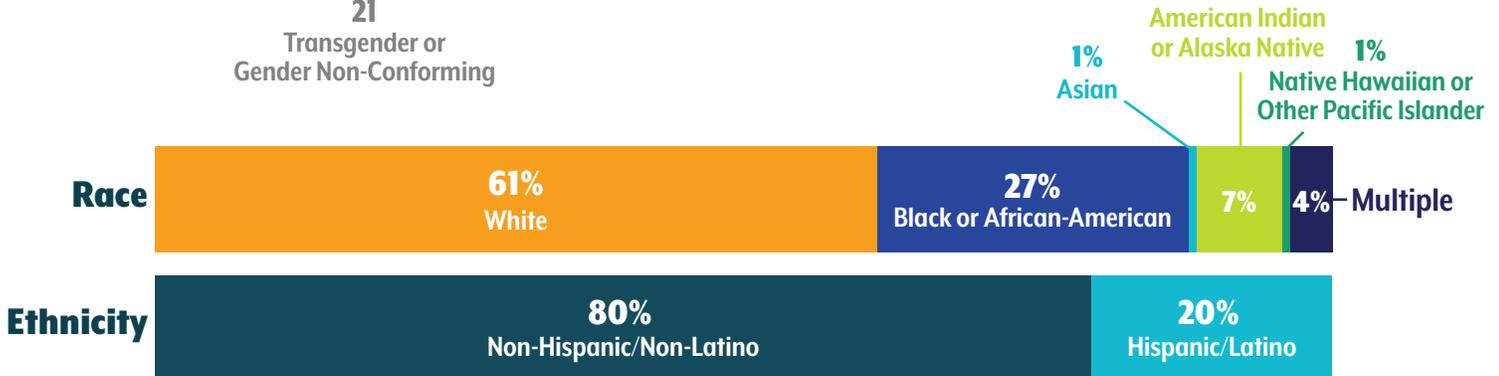
Source: Maricopa Regional Continuum of Care
PIT Count, 2015-2020

Demographics

The demographics of the PIT Count have been fairly **consistent** over the past few years. These charts show data from the 2020 PIT Count.



For the 2020 PIT Count, 61% of the population experiencing homelessness identified as male, 39% identified as female, and less than 1% identified as either transgender or gender non-conforming. The proportion of gender has remained the same for the PIT Count throughout the years. The PIT Count has a larger proportion of the population identifying as male than Maricopa County's average of 49% from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2019 Population Estimates.

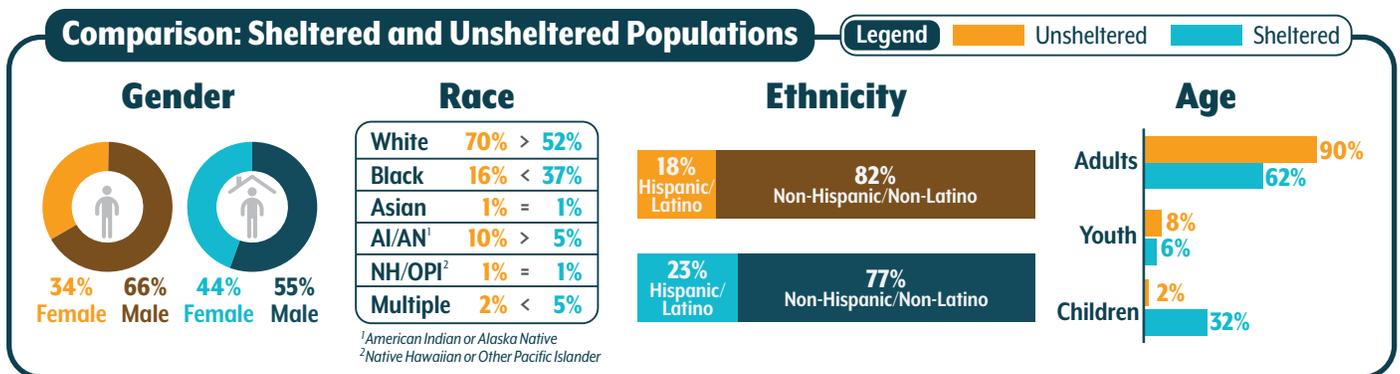


Over the years, the ethnic breakdown of the PIT Count has remained the same with a significant majority identifying as Non-Hispanic or Non-Latino; by race there has been a slight increase in the White population and the Black or African-American population, and a slight decrease in Multiple Races. The 2020 PIT Count reported a differing racial makeup than Maricopa County. Census estimates for Maricopa County are as follows: White (83%); Black or African American (6%); Asian (5%); American Indian or Alaskan Native (3%); Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (<1%); and Multiple Races (3%). The PIT population also has a higher percentage of people identifying as Non-Hispanic or Non-Latino compared to Maricopa County population estimates (69%).



The largest age group from the PIT Count is adults (age 25+), which accounted for 76% of the 2020 PIT population. Children (age 0-17) make up 17% of the population, while youth (age 18-24) make up only 7% of the count. The percentage of all age groups identified from the PIT Count did not change from 2019 to 2020. The PIT Count has a higher percentage of adults than population estimates for Maricopa County (67%).

Source: Charts show data from the 2020 PIT Count; Maricopa County demographics from the U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 Population Estimates



Special Populations

Legend solid line Total dashed orange line Unsheltered dashed blue line Sheltered

Families



From 2015 to 2020, the number of families has decreased by 12%. Families are defined in this report as households with at least one adult and one child. Almost all families identified from the PIT Count were in either emergency shelter or transitional housing. Families may be hard for volunteers to identify during the PIT Count due to tendencies to stay in vehicles or other hidden locations. This year's PIT Count took place on a particularly cold night, and it is possible that families were more likely to seek shelter that night.

Unaccompanied Youth, Age 18-24



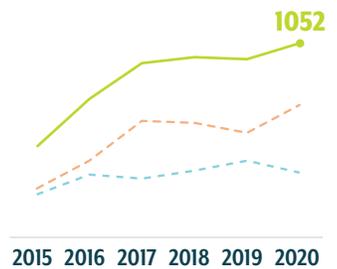
Youth ages 18-24 are considered a vulnerable population, and the number has increased in the past few years. Efforts to specifically count the population of unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness did not start until 2015. Youth are also a challenging subpopulation to identify during the PIT Count. To account for this, homeless youth service providers were invited to participate in the planning process and suggested ideas on PIT Count strategies, including hosting magnet events at resource centers specifically for this subpopulation.

Veterans



The number of veterans experiencing homelessness has increased. After a slight decrease in 2018, the number of veterans identified during the PIT Count increased again by 15% in 2019 and 4% in 2020. It is important to note that veteran status is self-reported for the PIT Count.

Chronically Homeless



The number of people who meet the chronic homelessness definition has significantly increased over the years. From 2015 to 2020, the total number of chronically homeless has increased by 119%. This year the chronic unsheltered number has increased by 28% since 2019 while the chronic sheltered number has decreased by 16%. *The HUD definition of chronic homelessness is: (1) a person who lives in a place not meant for human habitation, Safe Haven, or Emergency Shelter, (2) has a disability, and (3) has been homeless continuously for one year OR four or more times homeless in the last three years, where the combined length of time homeless is at least 12 months. When a head of household meets this definition, all household members are counted as chronically homeless.*

The PIT Count also collects information on other subpopulations based on self-reported, voluntary responses:

Additional Populations

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Mental Illness	523	931	866	903	966	965
Substance Abuse (Alcohol/Drug)	420	910	711	1,228	1,116	1,110
HIV/AIDS	13	68	60	80	117	157
Domestic Violence	604*	1,177*	1,154*	425	805	576

** Prior to 2018, the PIT Count collected data on 'Survivors of Domestic Violence'; in 2018, this field changed to 'Fleeing Domestic Violence'.*

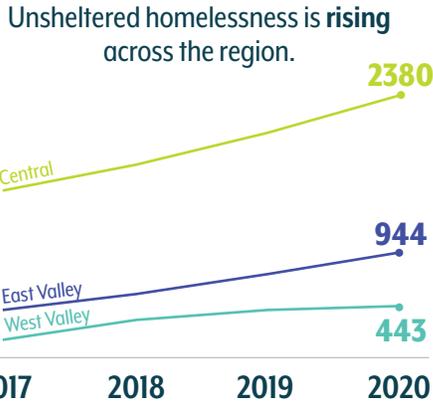
Regional Trends

Unsheltered Count

The overall unsheltered count for the Maricopa County region has been increasing each year. The number of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness in each subregion has also been increasing annually, with the majority of the unsheltered population concentrated in central Phoenix.

Subregions: West Valley Central East Valley

Unsheltered Count by Subregion

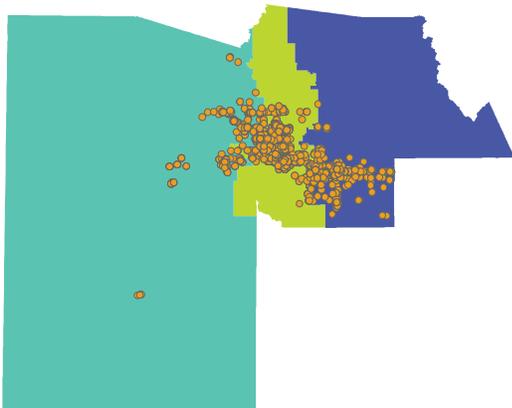


Subregion	2017	2018	2019	2020
Central	1,508	1,735	2,030	2,380
East Valley	412	560	736	944
West Valley	139	323	422	443

Unsheltered PIT Count Growth Rate

From 2017 to 2020, unsheltered homelessness in the Maricopa County region increased by **83%**. In the Central subregion (Phoenix), the growth rate in unsheltered homelessness was **58%**. In the East Valley, unsheltered homelessness increased by **129%** and in the West Valley, it went up by **219%**.

Locations of 2020 Unsheltered Surveys, Maricopa County



A more detailed map of the Unsheltered PIT Count is available online at: <https://www.azmag.gov/Programs/Homelessness/Point-In-Time-Homeless-Count>

Unsheltered Count by Municipality

Municipality	2017	2018	2019	2020
Avondale	27	13	35	56
Buckeye	0	22	24	41
El Mirage	0	2	7	9
Gila Bend	7	8	4	4
Glendale	57	164	194	170
Goodyear	7	22	22	23
Litchfield Park	0	0	0	0
Peoria	22	38	78	83
Sun City*	n/a	n/a	n/a	12
Surprise	16	39	33	29
Tolleson	0	9	5	5
Wickenburg	1	2	2	0
Youngtown	2	4	18	11
Phoenix	1,508	1,735	2,030	2,380
Carefree	0	0	0	0
Cave Creek	0	1	0	0
Chandler	27	54	54	75
Fountain Hills	0	0	0	0
Gilbert	2	4	2	9
Guadalupe	0	9	21	22
Mesa	130	144	206	338
Paradise Valley	0	0	0	0
Queen Creek	1	5	4	2
Scottsdale	50	67	76	102
Tempe	202	276	373	396
Total	2,059	2,618	3,188	3,767

*Sun City was not counted in previous years.

Additional Survey Questions

Where were you this time last year?



87% Maricopa County
8% Another State
5% Another County in AZ

Do you have any pets? How many?



237

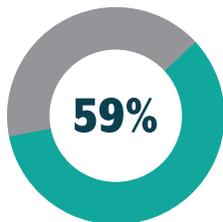
(including 35 service animals)

Source: 2020 Unsheltered PIT Count interview surveys

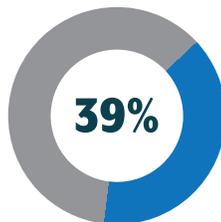
Sheltered Count

Most people experiencing sheltered homelessness during the 2020 PIT Count were in **Emergency Shelters**.

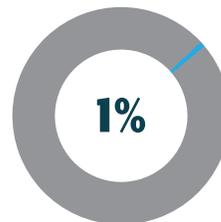
Emergency Shelter



Transitional Housing



Safe Haven*



Sheltered Count by Subregion

Subregion	2017	2018	2019	2020
Central	2,871	2,827	2,548	2,755
East Valley	486	704	672	698
West Valley	189	149	206	199
Total	3,546	3,680	3,426	3,652

The majority of Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing, and Safe Haven* programs are located in Phoenix. This year, a question was added to the unsheltered survey asking why people do not seek shelter services. Of those who responded to the question, the top two reasons reported were “previous negative experience with shelter” and “shelters full.”

* Note: Maricopa County no longer has “Safe Haven” projects, however, certain veteran Grant Per Diem beds are required by HUD to be reported as Safe Haven for the PIT Count.

Maricopa County

Maricopa County is the fastest growing region in the nation. The annual population growth rate has remained steady at 2% since 2012 (U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates). The PIT Count increased by 5% from 2018 to 2019, and 12% from 2019 to 2020.



Housing costs are high in the region. Maricopa County is the second most expensive county in Arizona.

Hourly Wage Needed to Afford a One-Bedroom Apartment at Fair Market Rent



Source: National Low Income Housing Coalition, Out of Reach 2020

Methodology

Every year, hundreds of volunteers, staff, and outreach workers participate in the PIT Count across the Maricopa County region. The unsheltered count relies on interview and observation survey responses. All cities and towns except for Phoenix do a direct census count. The City of Phoenix uses an extrapolation method that identifies high and low density grids. High density grids are counted via complete census, while a random sample of low density grids are counted and extrapolated. PIT Count volunteers use either paper survey forms or a

mobile app to submit electronic surveys for each person they encounter. This year, significantly more surveys were submitted through the mobile app. Due to its ease of use, volunteers were often able to complete more surveys when using the mobile app to fill out the form. The sheltered count comes from the region’s HMIS and service provider surveys to verify the number of beds and occupancy rates for each program.



Special thanks to the 2020 PIT Count Municipal Coordinators, volunteers, staff, and outreach teams that put in the time and effort to make this a successful count; Crisis Response Network for collecting and verifying provider data for the Housing Inventory Chart and Sheltered Count; the Maricopa Regional Continuum of Care for their support of this annual count; and to those experiencing homelessness who were willing to speak with us about their experiences.

For more information, visit <http://azmag.gov/Programs/Homelessness/Point-In-Time-Homeless-Count>



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