

HOMELESSNESS IN SACRAMENTO COUNTY

2009 Homeless Count Summary Report



From 2007 to 2009 chronic homelessness decreased by 34.8%

Count Results:

The Sacramento County Department of Human Assistance Homeless Programs (DHA) presents the following findings from the 2009 Point-in-Time Homeless Count. Held during the evening of January 27, 2009 the Homeless Count consisted of two distinct components: an unsheltered count and survey of persons living in places not meant for human habitation and a sheltered count (persons living in emergency or transitional housing). The 2009 Homeless Count findings are:

2009 Homeless Count Results

	Emergency Shelters	Transitional Housing	Unsheltered	Totals
Chronically Homeless	191	0	277	468
Other Homeless	520	895	917	2332
Total Homeless	711	895	1,194	2,800

Using a formula created by the Corporation for Supportive Housing and the Urban Institute, it is estimated that the number of homeless people in Sacramento County over the course of 2009 is 4,910.

Population Characteristics:

To provide population characteristics for those in shelters, data was pulled from the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and/or from questionnaires and case notes administered by shelter and housing staff. Homeless people counted on the street were asked a series of questions in interviews. The characteristics of the 2009 homeless population in Sacramento County include:

Characteristic	Number	Percent of Total
Chronically Homeless	468	16.7%
Mentally Ill	753	26.9%
Substance Abuse	1345	48.0%
Veterans	426	15.2%
Persons with HIV/AIDS	60	2.1%
Victims of Domestic Violence	699	25.0%
Unaccompanied Youth (under 18)	35	1.3%

Below is a year-to-year comparison between the 2007, 2008 and 2009 population characteristics:

	2007 Total	2008 Total	2009 Total	% Change From 2007 to 2009	% Change From 2008 to 2009
Chronically Homeless	718	680	468	-34.77%	-31.13%
Mentally Ill	675	913	753	11.56%	-17.52%
Substance Abuse	1312	1442	1345	2.52%	-6.73%
Veterans	383	518	426	11.23%	-17.76%
Persons with HIV/AIDS	40	49	60	50%	22.44%
Victims of Domestic Violence	551	545	699	26.86%	28.26%
Unaccompanied Youth (under 18)	9	16	35	288.88%	118.75%

Population sizes for persons with HIV/AIDS and unaccompanied youth are relatively small. Therefore, percent change information for these populations is not as informative as percent changes for larger subpopulations.

HUD defines chronically homeless as an unaccompanied homeless individual with a documented disabling condition who has been either continuously on the street or in an emergency shelter for a year or more, or has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years. The chronically homeless figure dropped from 29.3% in 2007 (718 out of 2,452) to 16.7% in 2009 (468 out of 2,800) a 34.8% decrease over two years. According to the recent Progress Report of the Ten-Year Plan, 320 chronically homeless people have entered housing since 2007, with 149 entering housing in 2008. The decrease of the number of chronically homeless may be attributed to the increase of those placed in permanent supportive housing.

This year's survey results also indicate an increase in homeless families with children, both on the streets and in emergency shelters/transitional housing. The number of households with dependent children increased by 14.3% (from 161 in 2008 to 184 in 2009), and the number of family members in those household increased by 22.4% (from 442 in 2008 to 541 in 2009).

Additional Information:

The 2007 Homeless Count corresponded to the launch of the Ten-Year Plan and provided a data baseline to evaluate progress in housing the chronically homeless. Since 2007, Sacramento County has employed a statistically reliable research-based method of counting. Below is a year-to-year comparison of the last three Homeless Counts:

Homeless Count Year-To-Year Comparison

	Chronically Homeless	Other Homeless	Total	% Increase from previous year
2009	468	2,332	2,800	4.6%
2008	680	1,998	2,678	9.2%
2007	718	1,734	2,452	

Other Institutions:

This year, information on the homeless population was also gathered from various institutions in the County: the Mental Health Treatment Center; alcohol and drug residential treatment facilities; five major hospitals; and the jail, including the main jail and Rio Consumnes Correctional Center. This information cannot be included in the homeless count reported to HUD in the Continuum of Care application, so it is not included in the totals in the previous charts. It does, however, provide a more complete picture of the homeless situation in Sacramento:

Sacramento Mental Health Treatment Center:	33
Alcohol and Drug Treatment facilities:	82
Hospitals	13
Main Jail/Rio Consumnes Correctional Center:	<u>344</u>
Total	472

Event Coordination and Participants:

The 2009 Homeless Count was a collaborative effort between homeless service providers, law enforcement agencies, the County and City park rangers, DHA, the County GIS Department, and approximately 425 volunteers. The volunteer ranks included over 60 currently homeless persons from the Salvation Army and Cottage Housing that participated in the count as guides for the count teams. The count in 2008 and 2009 was conducted in the evening; and, for the first time this year, every eligible, awake person was approached and asked to participate in the survey. All volunteers attended a mandatory training on how to conduct the count and administer the survey. Count teams were assigned their count areas between 7:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m., and the count occurred between 8:00 p.m. and midnight. During the after-count debriefing, most count teams reported having a good experience .

Future Efforts:

Sacramento County is committed to aiding community planning efforts to end homelessness with continued reliable counts of homeless populations and needs. In support of the Ten Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness and to comply with the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Continuum of Care application requirements, DHA will again coordinate a Homeless Count in late January 2011.