



# 2015 POINT IN TIME COUNT REPORT

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Point In Time (PIT) Count is an annual event required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to learn about *sheltered* and *unsheltered* individuals in each Continuum of Care (CoC). Sheltered individuals are those living in an emergency shelter, transitional housing, half-way house, or youth foster program on the night of the count. Unsheltered individuals are those living in encampments, cars, streets, or other locations not designed for human habitation on the night of the count. In addition to HUD's requirements, the Council on Homelessness or the Council also collected data on those in the community with another temporary living arrangement eligible for HUD funded services, referenced later as another temporary living arrangement or other. This includes individuals sleeping in short-term locations including treatment facilities, jails, hospitals, or doubled- or tripled-up with family or friends on a temporary basis.

The 2015 Point In Time (PIT) Count identified relatively little change in the number of people experiencing homelessness in the community from the last full count in 2013. However, the recent PIT Count captured a more detailed portrait of the County's homelessness population due to an updated methodology. The methodology was improved by extending the amount of days volunteers and street outreach teams were in the community, administering a survey to community members at service and community sites, and conducting a full census instead of sampling across the community. The 2015 PIT Count also recorded demographic information from (1) chronically homeless veterans and their families and (2) youth households, including parenting youth and unaccompanied youth. This improved methodology allowed for a more comprehensive count than in previous years.

The 2015 PIT Count identified a total of 3,715 homeless individuals on January 27, 2015. Of those 3,715 individuals, 36% were unsheltered, 19% were sheltered, and 45% were living in another temporary living arrangement (referred to as "Other" throughout this report). The individuals surveyed were also asked about the other members of their household. For the purposes of this data set, a household can be a single person or multiple people (including only adults or parents with dependent children). There were 1,222 unsheltered households, 476 sheltered households, and 1,216 other households identified. Among the total number of households (2,914), 37% were households with at least one adult and one minor child and 63% were in households with only adults. Of the 1,075 individuals in households with at least one adult and one minor child, 4% were unsheltered, 18% were sheltered, and 78% were living in another temporary living arrangement.

Among the 2,428 adults surveyed, 27% were chronically homeless, 6% were veterans, 27% were severely mentally ill, 12% were chronic substance abusers, 0.5% were persons with HIV/AIDS, and 14% were domestic violence survivors.

The 2015 total PIT Count documented a slight decrease in total homeless individuals counted, with 3,798 in 2013 to 3,715 in 2015 for a difference of 83 individuals. This is relatively minor considering that there was a decrease of 336 homeless individuals from 2011 (2,784) to 2013 (2,448).

## INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires each Continuum of Care (CoC) to conduct an annual census of sheltered and unsheltered people experiencing homelessness. The count is conducted on one day/night within the last ten days of January. The data collected is a one-time count, called the Point In Time (PIT) Count and therefore is not meant to represent the number of individuals who experience homelessness over the course of a year.

Data from the PIT Count will aid in the implementation of our Strategic Plan Update, [Forging Ahead](#), by assessing the needs of the community and identifying progress in accomplishing the goals of the plan.

A full sheltered and unsheltered count is conducted every other year, in “odd years.” Sheltered-only counts are conducted in “even years.” For 2015, a full count was conducted on January 27, 2015. The PIT Count results presented in this document reflect all the individuals experiencing homelessness counted on this night.

HUD requires each Continuum of Care to report how many people were sheltered in transitional housing and emergency sheltered programs and how many people were unsheltered on the date chosen in January. Those counted are broken down by age category and household type:

- Age Categories:
  - The number of children under age 18
  - The number of adults ages 18 to 24
  - The number of adults over age 24
  
- Household Categories:
  - Households with at least one adult and one child
  - Households without children
  - Households with only children (including one-child households and multi-child households)
  - Youth households (including parenting youth and unaccompanied youth)

HUD also requires the CoC to capture demographic data such as ethnicity, race, and gender, as well as subpopulation data for chronically homeless individuals and families, veterans, chronically homeless veterans, severely mentally ill persons, persons experiencing chronic substance abuse, persons with HIV/AIDS, and victims of domestic violence (optional reporting).

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## STRATEGY FOR A MORE COMPREHENSIVE AND INCLUSIVE COUNT

In previous years, Contra Costa County conducted a street-based count using outreach teams canvassing all of the known encampment areas in the county. Outreach teams conducted subpopulation data surveys with approximately every fifth person they encountered within a two-hour time window. Additionally, volunteers conducted a tallied count of people experiencing homelessness identified on the street.

This year’s count was more robust and thorough as data collection was conducted over three days providing more time to potentially identify more individuals experiencing homelessness and collect more in-depth data about all individuals willing to provide information.

## DEFINITIONS OF HOMELESSNESS

The data in this report represents both the numbers reported to HUD and the number of people in other temporary living situations qualifying them for HUD funded services. Individuals categorized as other temporary living situations (“Other”) includes anyone who told interviewers that they stayed in a jail, hospital, treatment program, or a friend or family member’s house on January 27 and consider themselves homeless because they do not have a steady and stable residence. Any family currently in the West Contra Costa Unified School District Homeless Education program as reported in HMIS (Homeless Management Information System) were also included in the “Other” category. These families include those that were “couch surfing” or “doubling-up” and fall within the [McKinney Vento](#) definition of homelessness used by the Department of Education.

Data reported to HUD do not include individuals that fall in the “Other” category to fully comply with their definition of homelessness. However, as a CoC, all people defined as homeless under HUD as well as “Other” are served and are reported in the annual PIT report. For more information, please review the HUD 2015 Point In Time Methodology Guide found [here](#).

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## PIT COUNT METHODOLOGY

There are a variety of strategies used by communities to capture an accurate representation of their homeless population during the PIT Count. Each community must identify the best practices to match the unique needs of their geographic location and homeless population density. Contra Costa County is over 720 square miles and has homeless individuals residing in shelters, encampments, and other temporary living situations ranging from rural to urban areas. The Contra Costa Council on Homelessness developed a strategy to best fit the needs of the community using national best practices and methodologies.

Three tools were utilized to collect 2015 PIT Count data:

1. **Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Data:** this captures all individuals residing in emergency shelters and transitional housing on the night of the PIT Count.
2. **Service and Community Site Canvas:** volunteers surveyed persons experiencing homelessness utilizing homeless services or community resources.
3. **Encampment Outreach:** trained staff surveyed all persons staying in homeless encampments.

## HOMELESS MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM (HMIS) DATA

HMIS data is collected for any individual utilizing homeless services at any agency in the Contra Costa County Homeless Continuum of Care (CoC). HMIS data is important for capturing data about the homeless population served throughout the year at the various CoC sites. For the PIT Count, this data is pulled only for those utilizing emergency or transitional shelter the night of the count. Shelter staff also provided a supplemental survey to report how many people were sheltered in their program that night, broken down by age category and household type.

The surveys and HMIS reports captured demographic and subpopulation data required for HUD reporting.

## SERVICE AND COMMUNITY SITE CANVAS

Outreach to individuals experiencing homelessness took place over a three-day period as they visited service providers and community agencies where homeless individuals tend to congregate. Most service providers were part of the CoC or were identified as known locations frequented by homeless persons. Service provider and community site locations identified included food distribution sites, multi-service centers, soup kitchens and dining halls, libraries, and health care facilities. The full list of service sites is available [here](#).

All volunteers were required to attend one of three training sessions offered on Sunday, January 25 and Monday, January 26. At this training, volunteers were assigned, based on their availability and location preferences, to a service site to interview potential members of the homeless community. The volunteers conducted a five to ten minute [survey](#) with each person experiencing homelessness they encountered asking them where they slept on the night of January 27 and their demographic information. Volunteers were posted in these sites over three days—January 28, January 29, and January 30. Volunteers were posted at the sites for two to four hour shifts at high traffic times as identified by the location managers and/or staff.

To ensure that the same people were not interviewed repetitively, the survey asked for the full name, birthdate, and social security number of each person interviewed. Duplicate surveys were then removed from the total count using the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).

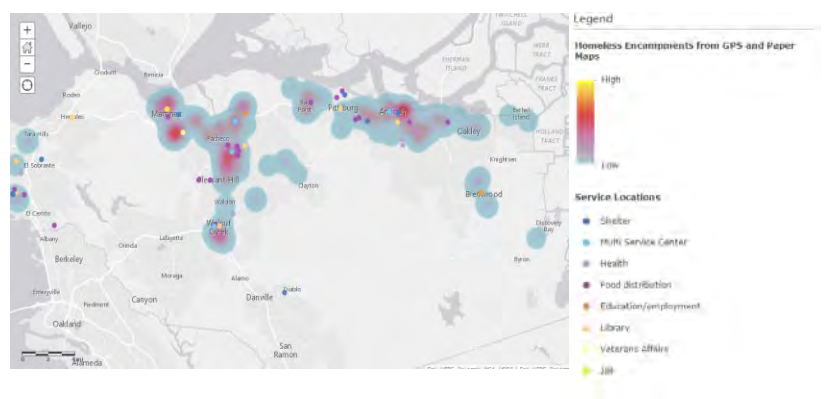
## ENCAMPMENT OUTREACH

Outreach was also conducted over a three-day period across encampments throughout the county. This outreach was completed by the CoC's regular outreach teams as they are trained in outreach techniques and familiar with encampment locations and the populations residing in those encampments. These teams utilized the HMIS data collection system already used when identifying new or current clients. Some individuals in encampments were not comfortable sharing personal information or were sleeping or unwilling to talk. For these individuals, the [2015 PIT Observation Tool](#) was completed to capture basic, observable information such as age and gender.

Outreach teams also tracked, either through GPS or hardcopy maps, the locations of each encampment to help illustrate primary geographic areas throughout the county where encampments have been established. Specific locations are not provided in this report to protect both the homeless community members as well as the local agencies serving those areas.

## ENCAMPMENT AND SERVICE SITES MAP

As described above, encampment locations were tracked using GPS or paper maps and entered into ARCGIS for visualization. Service sites where PIT Count was conducted were also included in the map. The shaded areas in the map illustrate where encampments were found the night of the PIT Count. The heat maps demonstrate where there was more density in encampments within a given area.



Service sites are represented by the colored dots on the map. Each type of service site is a specific color.

To view the encampment maps developed by the street outreach teams, click [here](#).

## 2015 PIT COUNT RESULTS

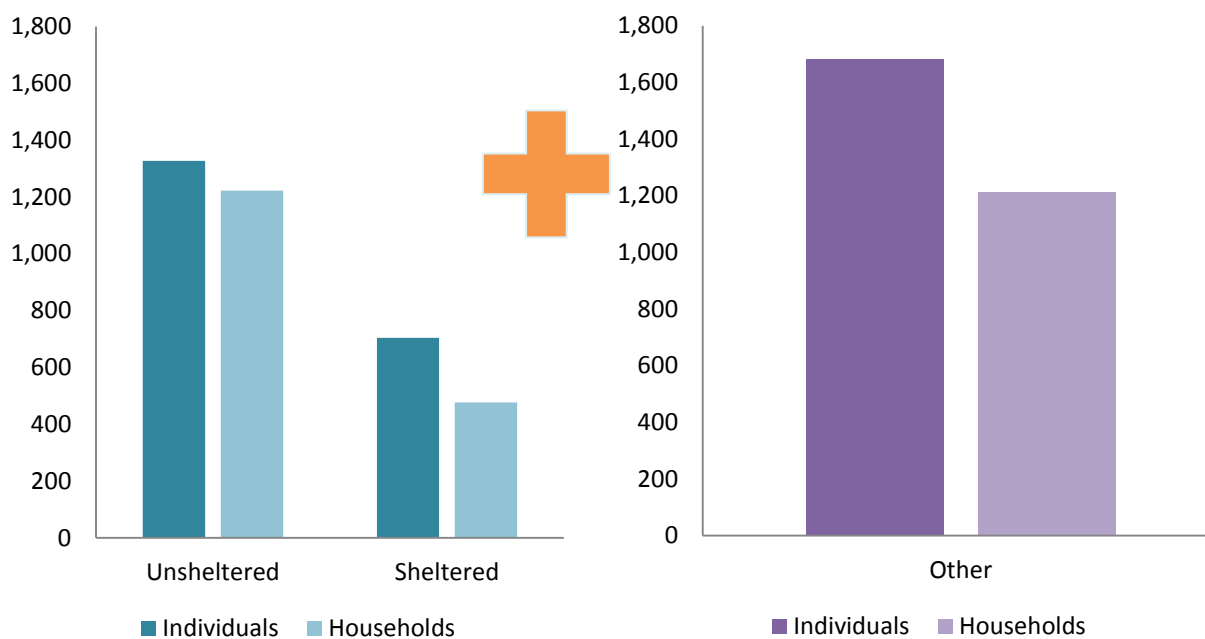
Each person included in the Count is identified as Unsheltered, Sheltered, or in Other Temporary Living Arrangements.

- **Unsheltered:** individuals living in encampments, cars, streets, or other locations not designed for human habitation
- **Sheltered:** individuals living in an emergency shelter, transitional housing, half-way house, or youth foster program
- **Other Temporary Living Arrangement Eligible for HUD Funded Services:** individuals sleeping in short-term locations including treatment facilities, jails, hospitals, or doubled- or tripled-up with family or friends on a temporary basis. These individuals are not included in the HUD definition of homelessness but are included in the Count as they qualify for HUD funded services and would be homeless if not for the temporary accommodations they had the night of the Count.

## SUMMARY

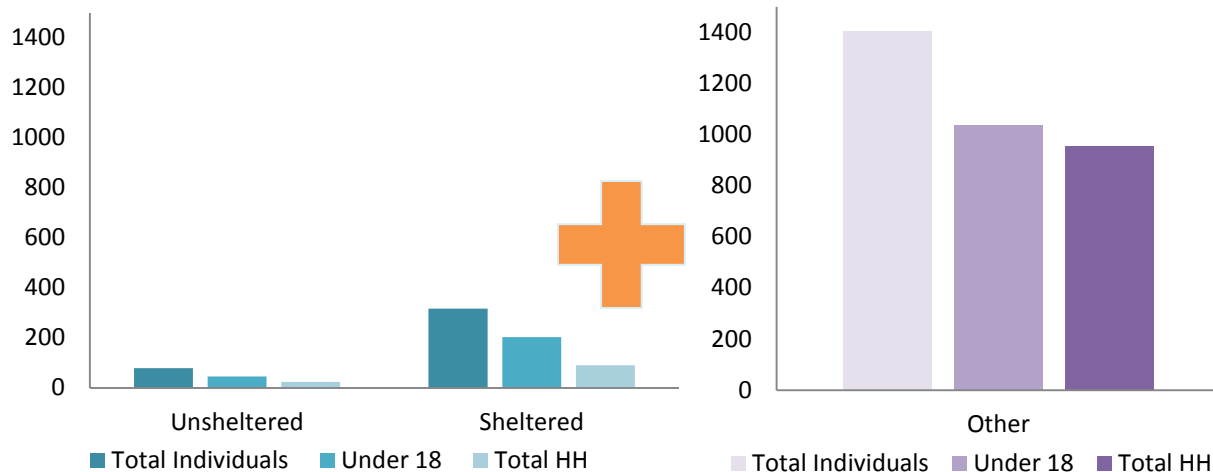
The 2015 PIT Count identified a total of 3,715 homeless individuals on January 27, 2015. Data for number of individuals and households by living arrangements (sheltered, unsheltered, and other) are provided below:

## INDIVIDUALS AND HOUSEHOLDS BY LIVING ARRANGEMENTS



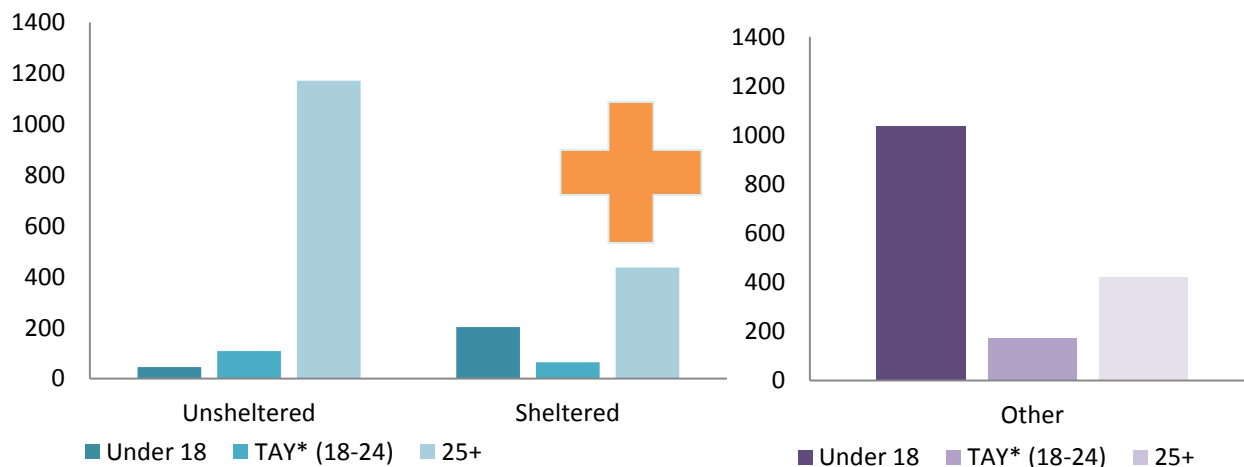
	Unsheltered	Sheltered		Other		Total
Individuals	1,326	704	+	1,685	=	3,715
Households	1,222	476	+	1,216	=	2,914

### LIVING ARRANGEMENTS FOR HOUSEHOLDS WITH MINORS



	Unsheltered	Sheltered	Other	Total
Total Individuals	79	318	+ 1,410	= <b>1,807</b>
Under 18	46	203	+ 1,038	= <b>1,287</b>
Total Households	25	91	+ 959	= <b>1,075</b>

### LIVING ARRANGEMENTS BY AGE GROUP AMONG HOUSEHOLDS WITH MINORS

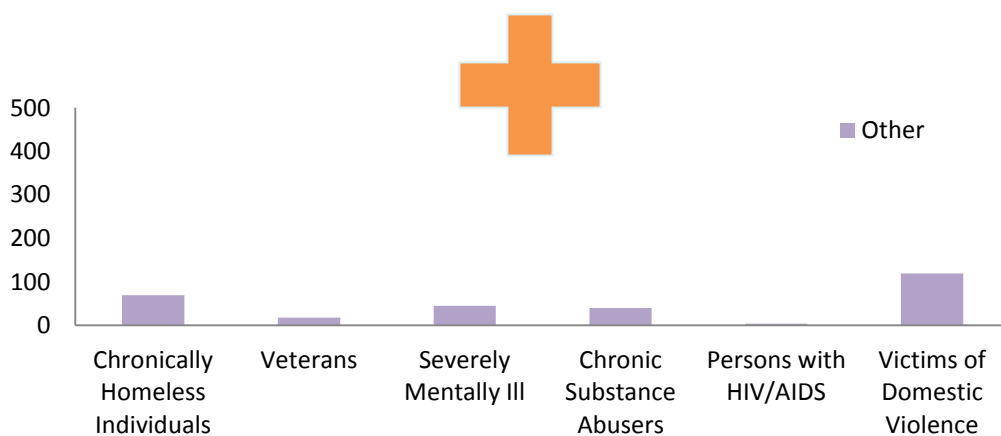
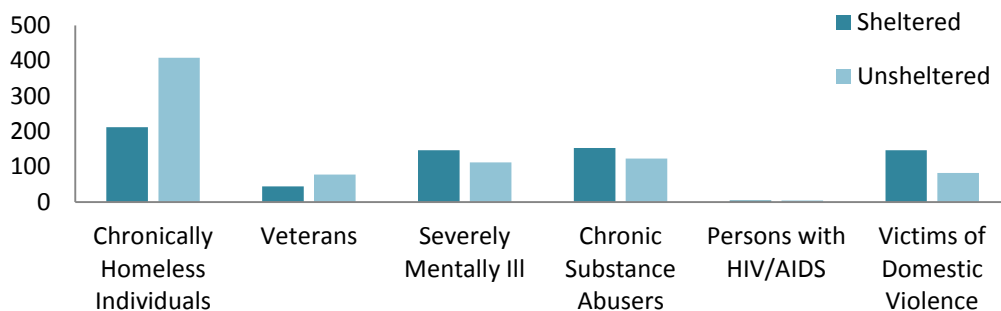


Age	Unsheltered	Sheltered	Other	Total
Under 18	46	203	+ 1,038	= <b>1,287</b>
TAY* (18-24)	109	64	+ 174	= <b>347</b>
25+	1,171	437	+ 422	= <b>2,030</b>

\*TAY refers to Transition Age Youth

### SUB-POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS

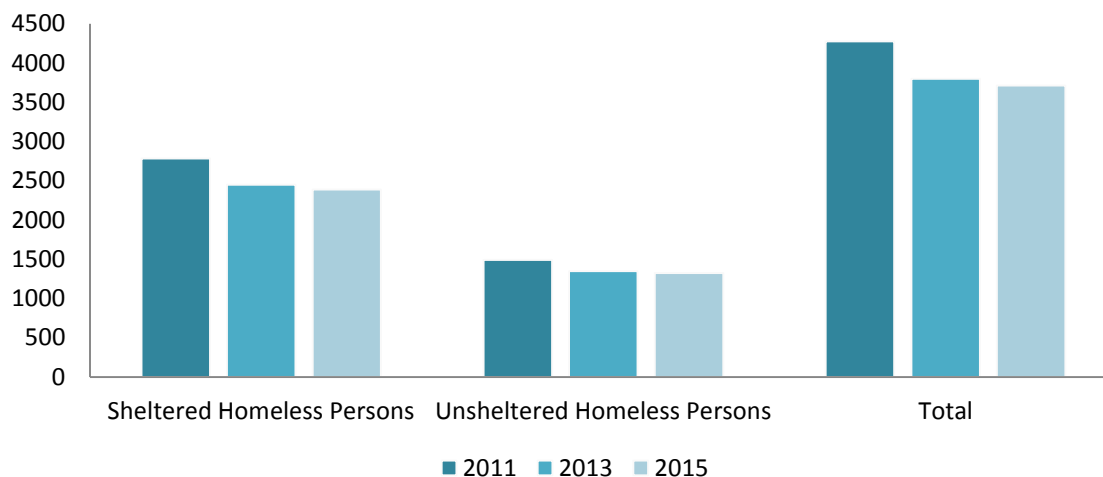
The following data for various subpopulation types were calculated through the use of HMIS data, service provider surveys, and Outreach Team and Service Site surveys. Please note that these categories are not mutually exclusive. Clients may be included in more than one subpopulation type.



	Sheltered	Unsheltered	Other	Total
Chronically Homeless Individuals	212	409	69	690
Veterans	44	78	18	140
Severely Mentally Ill	147	112	45	304
Chronic Substance Abusers	153	123	40	316
Persons with HIV/AIDS	4	4	3	11
Domestic Violence Survivors	147	82	119	348

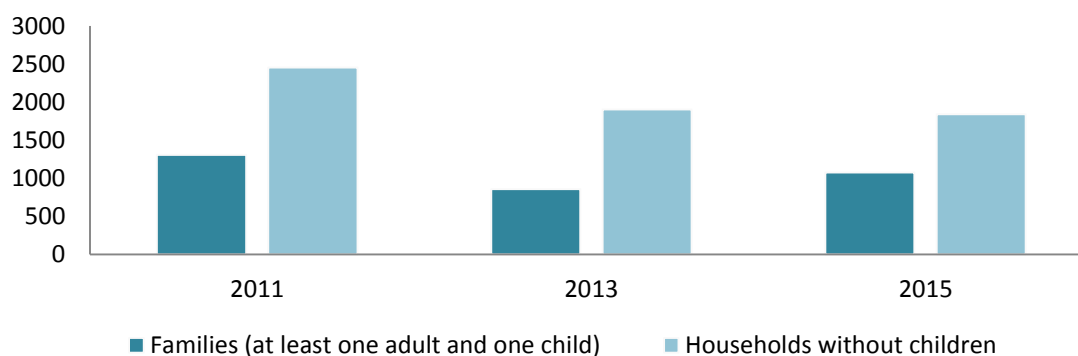
## COMPARISON TO PAST COUNTS

There was a slight decrease in the total number of homeless individuals in the 2015 PIT Count relative to the last full count conducted in 2013. The 2015 count identified 83 fewer individuals experiencing homelessness, going from 3,798 persons in 2013 to 3,715 in 2015. While data is available for year-to-year comparisons, it is important to note that PIT data collection strategies vary from year to year, and different programs may be included in each year's PIT Counts depending on new HUD definitions or strategies.



Sheltered and Unsheltered Totals	2011	2013	2015
Sheltered Homeless Persons	2,784	2,448	2,389
Unsheltered Homeless Persons	1,490	1,350	1,326
Total	4,274	3,798	3,715

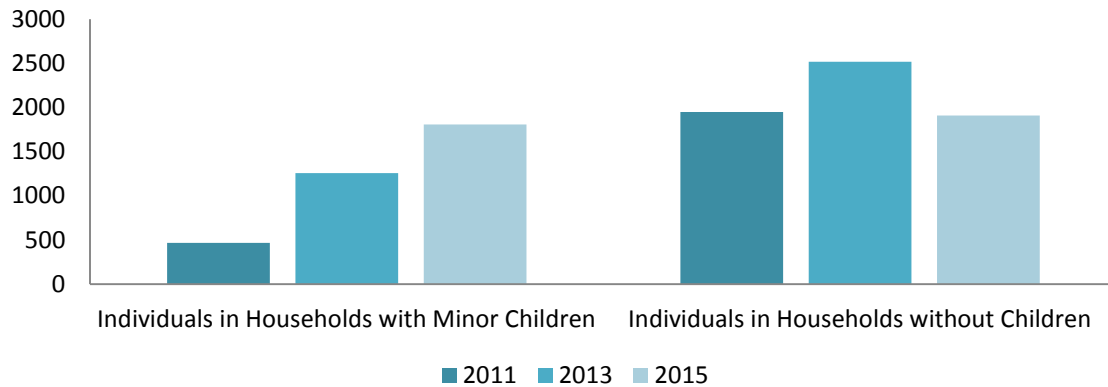
## HOMELESS HOUSEHOLDS



Homeless Household Details	2011	2013	2015
Households with Minor Children (Families)	1,307	858	1,075
Households without Children	2,453	1,902	1,839

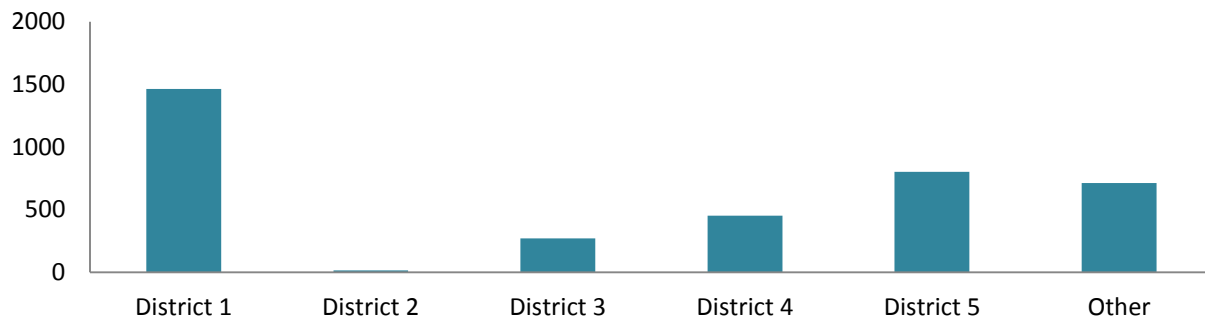


There was an increase in the number of families with minors identified during the count due to more rigorous strategies in reaching families that utilize services such as food banks and health clinics.

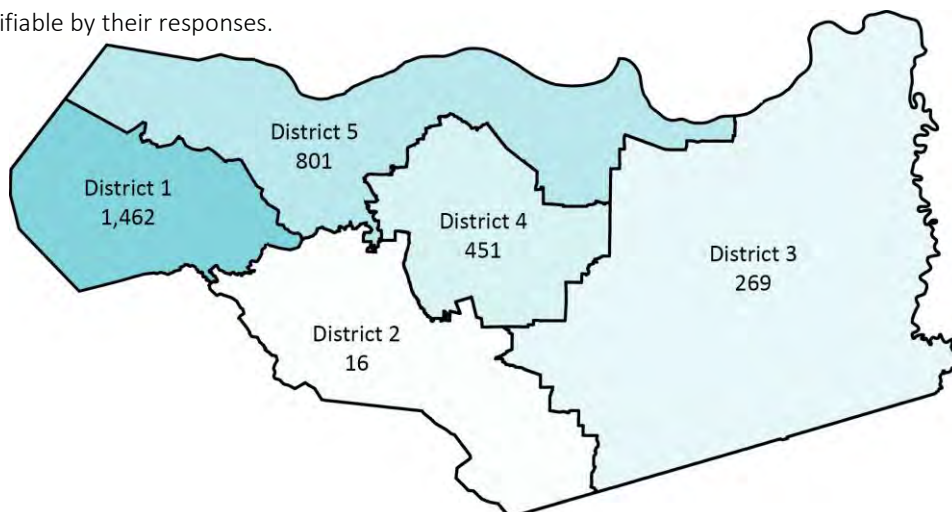


Individual Details	2011	2013	2015
Individuals in Households with Minor Children	680	1,255	1,804
Individuals in Households without Children	2,912	2,517	1,908
Individuals in Households with Only Children	9	26	3

#### DISTRICT BREAKDOWN\*



\*This data includes unsheltered, sheltered, and those with other temporary living arrangements making them eligible for HUD Funded Services. "Other" in this section refers to survey respondents whose district locations were not identifiable by their responses.



CITY BREAKDOWN

	Total Homeless	Veterans	Chronically Homeless
Antioch	313	23	101
Bay Point	93	2	8
Bethel Island	8	0	2
Brentwood	32	0	3
Byron	4	0	0
Clayton	7	0	1
Concord	299	19	92
Crockett	2	1	0
Danville	5	1	1
Discovery Bay	3	1	1
El Cerrito	55	1	2
El Sobrante	63	2	3
Hercules	149	2	1
Knightsen	1	0	0
Lafayette	2	0	2
Martinez	200	15	40
N Richmond	9	0	2
Oakley	54	1	3
Orinda	4	0	0
Pacheco	23	1	2
Pinole	101	0	3
Pittsburg	146	6	44
Pleasant Hill	73	0	3
Port Costa	1	0	1
Richmond	846	17	113
Rodeo	32	1	5
San Pablo	397	7	22
San Ramon	5	1	2
Walnut Creek	72	2	16
TOTAL*	2,999	103	473

\*Please note that not all survey respondents answered where they were located on the night of the count and therefore totals do not reflect all surveys collected.

## SUMMARY CONCLUSIONS

This year's Point In Time Count built upon previous methodologies to improve the data collection on persons experiencing homelessness in Contra Costa County. While this year's count was consistent with previous years' reported data, it provided a richer understanding of the County's homelessness population by partnering with local volunteers, service sites, and outreach teams. The robust volunteer support and dedicated outreach teams made it possible to conduct a full census count of every person encountered over a three-day period. Outreach teams also provided additional data on location, fostering the development of a GPS mapping system that will continue to expand as a resource for service providers. Additionally, the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) helped to streamline the data collection process and capture demographics from providers that do not usually enter into HMIS. Without these partnerships the PIT Count would not have been as accurate or informative.

The Point In Time Count is more than a federally mandated requirement; it is an opportunity to assist those most vulnerable in our community. The Point In Time Count communicates who is experiencing homelessness on a given night through providing key demographic information to the Council. For example, this year the PIT Count included additional data on youth subpopulations to identify parenting youth and unaccompanied minors. By better understanding youth households that are experiencing homelessness, the Council can organize efforts to best serve the needs of this highly vulnerable group through their strategic planning, service delivery, and advocacy efforts. The Point In Time Count provides insight to help the Council move forward its goals of providing permanent housing and preventing instances of homelessness.

**To learn more about the Contra Costa Council on Homelessness and to get involved, visit:**

<http://cchealth.org/homeless/policy-planning/>

### Links listed in the report:

Forging Ahead: <http://cchealth.org/homeless/pdf/2014-strategic-plan-update-Final-Draft.pdf>

McKinney Vento: <http://cchealth.org/homeless/pdf/2014-strategic-plan-update-Final-Draft.pdf>

PIT Methodology Guide: <https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/4036/point-in-time-count-methodology-guide/>

PIT Service and Community Sites: <https://homebase.app.box.com/s/x6urb5obqlc0573y1bbae2p077dt93cu>

PIT Survey Tool: <https://homebase.app.box.com/s/9jzn2mvnkfevx59hrqsk2nxn4tvjwltu>

2015 PIT Observation Tool: <https://homebase.app.box.com/s/39hdt7wiva1t9glvctkhhy5az9778rpw>

PIT GIS map: <https://www.arcgis.com/home/webmap/viewer.html?webmap=8b757f8848ad476db2cf9d7c479f74aa>