

## How to Use this Tool

### Understanding Racial Disparity in Your CoC

Each community has unique circumstances impacting homeless populations. The CoC Analysis Tool: Race and Ethnicity draws on Point-In-Time Count (PIT) and American Community Survey (ACS) data to facilitate analysis of racial disparities among people experiencing homelessness. Such an analysis is a critical first step in identifying and changing racial and ethnic disparities in our systems and services.

#### How to Use the Tool

Select a CoC from the dropdown at the top of the Dashboard tab. The charts and tables will automatically populate with local and state data.

The first bar chart shows racial distributions for the selected CoC for the total population, people living in poverty, people experiencing homelessness, and people experiencing unsheltered homelessness. By comparing racial distributions between persons experiencing homelessness and the general population, we can identify if certain racial groups experience homelessness at disproportionate rates. Comparing the demographics of people experiencing homeless to people experiencing poverty, we are able to identify racial disparities in homelessness that poverty alone cannot account for. We can also identify demographic differences between people who experience sheltered and unsheltered homelessness.

The bar charts also include the racial distribution for individuals in families with children who were experiencing homelessness. For these individuals, the race data is based on the racial identity of the head of household. It is a proxy and may not accurately represent the racial identity of all household members.

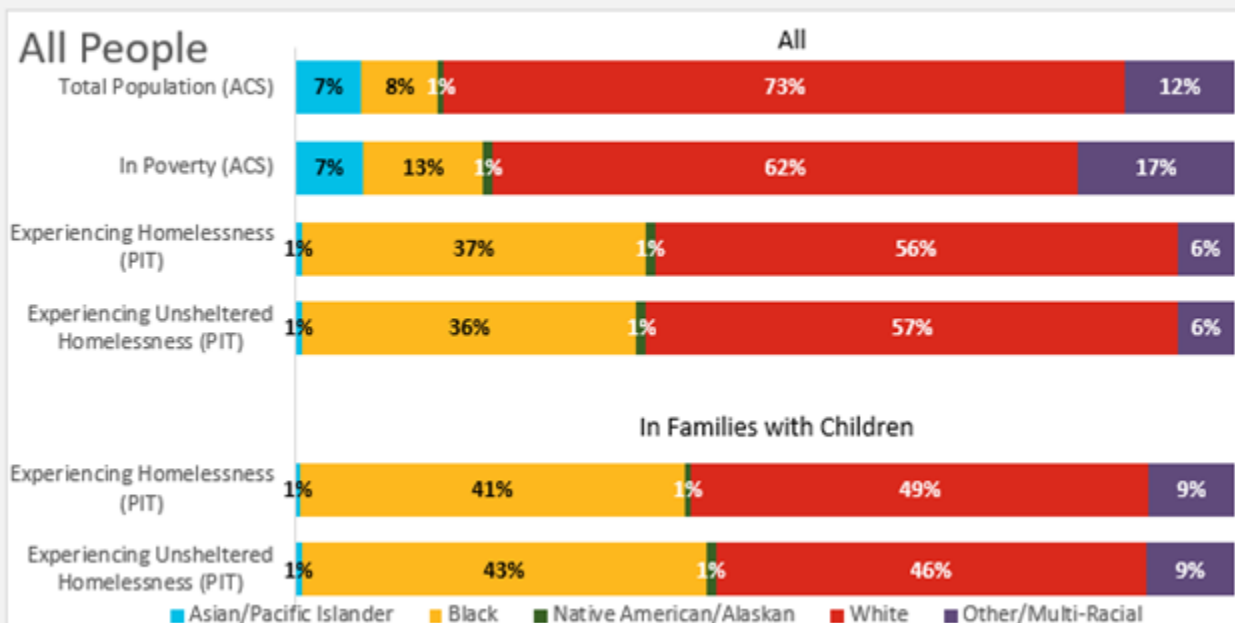
The bar charts in the center and on the right show the total population and homelessness data for youth and veterans, respectively. Comparable poverty data is not available for these subgroups.

#### Example Reading of Distribution of Race Chart

For example, when reading the chart below, we see that 8% of the total population of the geography served by the CoC identified as Black in the 2015-2019 American Community Survey. We also see that 37% of people experiencing homelessness in the Point-In-Time Count identified as Black. What factors might contribute to this large racial disparity in homelessness?

Looking at families with children experiencing homelessness in this sample CoC, we see an even larger portion of Black households experiencing homelessness (41%).

### Distribution of Race



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The next set of bar charts in the Dashboard displays the distribution of Hispanic and Non-Hispanic groups in the same configurations, enabling a comparison between the general population of the geography served by the CoC and people experiencing homelessness amongst singles, families, youth, and veterans.

The CoC Data tables below the charts include the data that is represented in the charts as well as additional detail, including the raw numbers used to calculate the percentages in each group.

The State Data table provides a broader context with racial distributions for the entire state, those in poverty, and persons experiencing homelessness, with a breakout of families with children.

### Example Reading of CoC Data Table

In this example, we see that the CoC serves a geography with a total population of 1,291,603 households, of which 104,673 (8%) are Black households. The PIT data shows that 1,083 (37%) of the 2,954 households experiencing homelessness were Black.

#### CoC Data

Race and Ethnicity	Total Population (ACS) <sup>1</sup>				In Poverty (ACS) <sup>1</sup>				Experiencing Homelessness (PIT) <sup>2</sup>			
	All		In Families with Children		All		In Families with Children		All		In Families with Children	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
<b>All People</b>	<b>1,291,603</b>		<b>509,692</b>		<b>147,330</b>		<b>61,452</b>		<b>2,954</b>		<b>1,059</b>	
<b>Race</b>												
Asian/Pacific Islander	92,033	7%	42,619	8%	10,679	7%	1,964	3%	21	1%	6	1%
Black	104,673	8%	41,284	8%	18,895	13%	9,622	16%	1,083	37%	433	41%
Native American/Alaskan	8,077	1%	4,213	1%	1,358	1%	948	2%	27	1%	8	1%
White	937,752	73%	348,783	68%	91,975	62%	34,553	56%	1,644	56%	516	49%
Other/Multi-Racial	149,068	12%	72,793	14%	24,423	17%	14,366	23%	179	6%	96	9%
<b>Ethnicity</b>												
Hispanic	427,387	33%	215,508	42%	71,849	49%	44,045	72%	960	32%	481	45%
Non-Hispanic	864,216	67%	294,184	58%	75,481	51%	17,407	28%	1,994	68%	578	55%

### COVID-19 Impact on PIT Count Data

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, HUD waived the requirement for CoCs to conduct a full unsheltered point in time count in 2021 and allowed greater flexibility in how communities conducted their counts, including allowing them to collect less data. Therefore, CoCs that did not conduct an unsheltered count or did not collect race and ethnicity data in their unsheltered count do not have data available for those sections of the Dashboard. Those CoCs may want to reference the race and ethnicity data from their 2019 PIT count (see CoC Analysis Tool 2.1) to compare with the population data included in this version of the tool (drawn from the 2015-2019 ACS).

To learn more about the waivers, see the HUD memo:

<https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/6246/cpd-memo-availability-of-waivers-for-the-biennial-pointintime-count-of-unsheltered-homelessness/>

To find out more information about how a specific CoC conducted their 2021 PIT Count, please contact the CoC directly. Contacts can be located on the HUD Exchange:

[Grantee Contact Information page](#)

***Technical Notes***

1. When you first open the document, select Enable Content in the yellow bar.
2. If you get a pop-up asking to make it a trusted document, select "Yes"
3. In order to best view the charts and tables on your monitor or for printing, you may need to adjust the zoom in the lower right corner of the Excel window.
4. Scroll to the right to view all six bar graphs and two data tables.
5. Percentages of 5% or less might be difficult to view in the charts at the top of the page, but can be referenced in the corresponding tables below.
6. Percentages of less than 0.5% will be rounded down and displayed as 0%. Use the "N" to calculate the unrounded percentage.
7. If you see ##### instead of a number in a cell, widen the column until you can see the numbers.
8. Blank cells in the tables indicate that data is not available for that subpopulation.

***Do NOT...***

1. Hide rows below 89 on the DASHBOARD tab. These are necessary for the charts.
2. Modify table cells on the DASHBOARD tab. Doing so will overwrite the formulas.

# Methodology

## Methodology Notes

### *Definition and Data Sources for Homelessness*

The number of people experiencing homelessness represented in this tool is drawn from the 2021 Point-In-Time (PIT) Count data reported in the Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to the U.S Congress. PIT Counts are unduplicated 1-night estimates of sheltered and unsheltered homeless populations conducted by CoCs nationwide during the last week of January each year.

People who are experiencing **sheltered homelessness** are defined as "an individual or family 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)," as defined at 24 CFR 578.3 of the Homeless Definition Final Rule.

People who are experiencing **unsheltered homelessness** are defined as "an individual or family with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed 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," as defined at 24 CFR 578.3 of the Homeless Definition Final Rule.

For more information on homelessness definitions, see the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Defining Homeless Final Rule:

<https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/1928/hearth-defining-homeless-final-rule/>

PIT Count data is not perfect- methodologies vary place to place and year to year; the unsheltered count is particularly challenging. While some CoC PIT data may include duplication of households, it is more likely that PIT data is an undercount, due to not all homeless households being identified. Staffing, weather, and geography all have an impact on the data. In most communities there remains a need for improved data accuracy and increased cultural competence in outreach and engagement.

Nevertheless, PIT Count Data is an important indicator to consider, and our best available estimate of rates of homelessness in a given community. More information on the PIT Count and AHAR can be found here:

<https://www.hudexchange.info/homelessness-assistance/ahar/>

CoC's that are missing demographic data, such as age or race, for a portion of the households in their PIT Count are required by HUD to extrapolate to account for and report on their demographic characteristics. See the Point-in-Time Count Implementation Tools page for more information on extrapolation:

<https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/4433/point-in-time-count-implementation-tools/>

### *Unsheltered PIT Count Flexibility*

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, HUD encouraged communities to determine if they could safely conduct unsheltered PIT counts and, if they could not and conducted a count the year prior, waived the requirement to conduct a full unsheltered count in 2021. For communities that determined they could conduct unsheltered PIT counts, HUD allowed greater flexibility in how communities conducted their counts and what data they collected, including allowing them to collect less data.

<https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/6246/cpd-memo-availability-of-waivers-for-the-biennial-pointintime-count-of-unsheltered-homelessness/>

### *Definition and Data Sources for Poverty and Race*

Individuals are counted as being in poverty if they are part of a household whose total annual income is less than the poverty threshold. Threshold levels are set by household size, but are not adjusted by location. For this reason, the impact of poverty on housing affordability varies from community to community. For more information on how poverty is measured, see below:

<https://www.census.gov/topics/income-poverty/poverty/about.html>

## CoC Analysis Tool: Race and Ethnicity v.3.0

The racial distributions of all people and of those living in poverty are sourced from the American Community Survey (ACS) 2015-2019 5-year estimates. Tract estimates were pulled from the census TIGER data found at the link below. For this analysis, the following tables were used:

- ACS2019\_RACE\_tract.csv
- ACS2019\_FAMILY\_HOUSEHOLD\_tract.csv
- ACS2019\_ETHNICITY\_tract.csv
- ACS2019\_AGE\_tract.csv
- ACS2019\_VETERAN\_tract.csv
- ACS2019\_POVERTY\_tract.csv

[https://www2.census.gov/geo/tiger/TIGER\\_DP/2019ACS/ACS\\_2019\\_5YR\\_TRACT.gdb.zip](https://www2.census.gov/geo/tiger/TIGER_DP/2019ACS/ACS_2019_5YR_TRACT.gdb.zip)

Race data for individuals in families is based on the racial identity of the head of household. It is a proxy and may not accurately represent the racial identity of all household members.

The race categories used in this analysis may not accurately reflect the racial identities and lived experience of individuals. The availability of this data, however imperfect, provides a starting place to examine racial disparities in each CoC.

The CoC estimates were aggregated from Tract estimates, using a Tract-to-CoC crosswalk that was created with ArcGIS mapping software. For consistency (especially for statewide CoCs), the state estimates were aggregated in the same way and, as a result, may look slightly different from the state-level estimates available directly from the ACS.

Estimates of individuals "In Families with Children" are calculated from the number of families in the given category, by race, multiplied by the average family household size for the given category, by race. For example:

**Black people in families with children = Number of black families with children \* average black family household size**

Estimates of total youth come from a proxy variable capturing the number of households where the householder (an ACS term consistent with "head of household" in the PIT Count) is under 25 years old. This is a reasonable estimate of the number of unaccompanied youth, and is thus slightly more comparable to the homelessness numbers from the PIT, which include "unaccompanied youth and parenting persons under 25 years old."

More information about the ACS can be found here:

[United State Census Bureau: American Fact Finder](#)

### *Updates from Version 1*

There are three methodology updates since version 1:

- In Version 1, data were pulled at the Block Group (BG) level. Since not all data points are available at the BG level, county proportions were used in many cases. In Version 2, all data are pulled at the Tract level.
- In Version 1, the number of **individuals in families with children** may have been overestimates because the underlying variables did not distinguish families with children from families without children. In Version 2, the calculation of individuals in families with children makes this distinction (see above calculation). Though this change impacted the estimated number of individuals in families, it had a relatively small impact on the race breakouts of individuals in families. The results we see are that this approach tends to bring the degree to which families with children in poverty are White down (by 6% on average) and the degree to which those same families are Black and in the "other" category up (by 2% each on average). Native and Asian breakouts were stable. The differences were not tremendous and we believe this represents an improvement to the methodology.
- In Version 1, the number of **youth** reflected the number of people under 25 years old. In Version 2, to be more aligned to the PIT data which focus on unaccompanied and parenting youth, the number of **youth** reflects the number of households with the householder under 25 years old (see note on youth above).

## CoC Analysis Tool: Race and Ethnicity v.3.0

### *Updates from Version 2*

There are two methodology updates since version 2:

- Version 2.1 of the CoC Analysis Tool: Race and Ethnicity corrects an error in the All People chart of the Distribution of Ethnicity section of version 2. The percentages displayed in the bar chart for Hispanic and Non-Hispanic people Experiencing Homelessness were incorrectly displaying the percentages of Hispanic and Non-Hispanic people In Poverty. The percentages in the tables were correct. Please note, if you have used the information from this chart in the version 2 tool, the distribution of Hispanic and Non-Hispanic people experiencing homelessness has been misrepresented.
- Version 2.1 of the CoC Analysis Tool: Race and Ethnicity corrects an error in the Youth sections of the CoC and State tables, as well as the Youth chart of version 2. The numbers and percentages of all youth, at the CoC and State level, were incorrectly displaying the numbers and percentages of youth *households*, rather than *individuals*. This had the effect of undercounting the total number of youth at the CoC and State level. Please note, if you have used this information from either the chart or table in the version 2 tool, the distribution of youth in your CoC and State has been misrepresented.

### *Updates from Version 2.1*

- Version 3.0 of the CoC Analysis Tool: ACS data are pulled from ACS 2015-2019 5-Year estimates. PIT data are pulled from PIT 2021.
- Version 3.0 of the CoC Analysis Tool: In the charts and tables on the DASHBOARD tab the single race categories are sorted alphabetically, followed by the Other/Multi-Racial category.
- Version 3.0 of the CoC Analysis Tool: In the "Distribution of Race" and "Distribution of Ethnicity" bar charts on the DASHBOARD tab, bars for the total population ("Total Population (ACS)") were added to each chart above the bar for households in poverty.
- Version 3.0 of the CoC Analysis Tool: In the "CoC Data" table, the numbers for the unsheltered homelessness counts are displayed as "NOT AVAILABLE" if the CoC did not report the data by race.
- Version 3.0 of the CoC Analysis Tool: In the charts on the DASHBOARD tab, the bar colors for the Black populations have been changed from light gray to orange.

## Next Steps

### Additional Data Available & Recommended Analysis

In order to understand whether racial disparities are impacting people's experience of homelessness in a given community, stakeholders should look at multiple data sources. This tool helps communities identify disparities in who experiences homelessness in their does not shed light on how the homeless service system is serving communities of color. Fortunately, other data sources and visualization tools are available to support taking the next step with that analysis.

#### *Longitudinal Systems Analysis and Stella Performance*

In 2018, the Longitudinal Systems Analysis (LSA) replaced the Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) as the primary mechanism for reporting demographic and system use data to HUD. The LSA includes data on households served in HMIS-participating emergency shelter, Safe Haven, transitional housing, rapid rehousing, and permanent supportive housing projects. More information about the LSA can be found here:

<https://www.hudexchange.info/homelessness-assistance/lisa/>

Stella Performance (Stella P) is a visualization tool based on the LSA data, highlighting system performance for households that have been served in HMIS participating programs during the report period. Performance measures include:

- The length of time people spent homeless and in the service system (Days Homeless),
- Successfully exiting homelessness to permanent housing (Exits), and
- The degree to which households that have exited the homeless system return to the system (Returns).

Stella P supports CoCs in understanding how their homeless crisis response system is serving households that belong to difference race and ethnicity groups through the Population Group analysis for each of the above performance measures.

In addition, Stella P includes race and ethnicity distributions for households served in different project types in the Demographic Comparison section.

Stella P is available to CoCs through the HDX 2.0. More information about equity analysis with Stella P can be found here:

[Stella P Race and Ethnicity Analysis Guide](#)

#### *Coordinated Entry: Access, Assessment, Prioritization, and Referral*

CoCs are encouraged to conduct their own equity analyses of their coordinated entry (CE) systems. Some of these analyses suggest that CE assessments may be perpetuating racial and ethnic inequities. For more information:

[Advancing Racial Equity through Assessments and Prioritization](#)

#### *Qualitative Data*

To understand how race and ethnicity disparities are playing out in the homeless crisis response system and what to do about it, communities will need to look beyond the numbers. System planning and evaluation should include input from people with lived expertise of homelessness, members of race and ethnic groups that have been historically marginalized, and front-line staff who work directly with people experiencing homelessness. For guidance on qualitative analysis see:

[Untapped Expertise - Inclusive Stakeholder Engagement](#)

[Engaging with People who have been Homeless](#)

#### *Additional Resources*

[Disaster Response Rehousing: Equity](#)

#### *Note:*

*The contents of this document, except when based on statutory or regulatory authority or law, do not have the force and effect of law and are not meant to bind the public in any way. This document is intended only to provide clarity to the public regarding existing requirements under the law or agency policies.*