



The Homeless in America: A Profile Based on the First Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR)

The Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) is a national report to Congress on the extent and nature of homelessness in America. The AHAR uses data from Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS) to estimate the number and characteristics of people who use homeless residential services and their patterns of service use. These estimates include point-in-time counts and a longitudinal count during a three-month reporting period (February 1 to April 30, 2005). The AHAR also uses data from Continuum of Care funding applications to produce point-in-time estimates of the sheltered and unsheltered homeless populations. A full copy of the AHAR can be downloaded from HUD's website.

How Many People Are Homeless?

- 754,000 people were homeless in the U.S. on a given night in January 2005. Among these persons, 415,000 were sheltered in emergency or transitional housing and 339,000 were unsheltered.
- 704,000 people used emergency shelter or transitional housing at some time between February 1 and April 30, 2005.

What are the Characteristics of Sheltered Homeless Persons?

- 462,000 persons (or 66 percent) are unaccompanied homeless adults and youth.
- 242,000 persons (or 34 percent) are homeless adults and children in 73,000 families.
- Nearly one quarter of all homeless persons are age 17 or younger, and less than 2 percent are elderly.
- 59 percent of homeless persons identify themselves as minorities, and 45 percent of homeless persons identify themselves as African-American.
- 25 percent of adult homeless persons have a disability.
- 19 percent of adult homeless persons are veterans.
- 23 percent of sheltered and unsheltered homeless persons are chronically homeless.
- Homeless individuals in cities are more likely to be single individuals, minorities and people with disabilities.
- Almost half of homeless individuals in suburban and rural areas are in families with children, and nearly a third of these persons are children.