

RURAL NEVADA CONTINUUM OF CARE

2020

POINT IN TIME COUNT



**A report on homelessness in
Rural Nevada**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The annual Point in Time (PIT) count would not be possible without the contributions and effort of many groups and individuals, including social service and other county agencies, law enforcement, non-profit organizations, school district McKinney-Vento liaisons, Bitfocus staff, and volunteers. Of particular note are the contributions of individuals serving as county leads, who played a critical role in organizing outreach teams, rallying community support, and collecting, submitting, and validating data. The spirit and contributions of participants reflects their commitment to their communities and their desire to do what they can with few resources, as well as the coordinated and collaborative nature of the RNCoc.

Thank you to all contributors for your commitment of time and your ongoing efforts to help combat homelessness in Nevada.

This report was made possible through funding from the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public and Behavioral Health.

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This report was developed by Social Entrepreneurs, Inc. (SEI), a Nevada-based consulting firm that serves as the coordinator for the Rural Nevada Continuum of Care.

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INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

To address the problems of homelessness in a comprehensive manner, the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) competitively funds the Continuum of Care (CoC) across the nation. Nevada has three CoCs: Northern Nevada, Southern Nevada, and the Balance of State. The Balance of State CoC is referred to as the Rural Nevada Continuum of Care (RNCOC). The RNCOC comprises 15 counties in Nevada, as described below.

List of Counties in Nevada's CoC

- Carson City
- Churchill County
- Douglas County
- Elko County
- Esmeralda County
- Eureka County
- Humboldt County
- Lander County
- Lincoln County
- Lyon County
- Mineral County
- Nye County
- Pershing County
- Storey County
- White Pine County

Locations of Counties in Nevada's RNCOC



UNDERSTANDING THE CONTINUUM OF CARE

CoCs are commonly organized around two main goals – planning for a homeless housing and service system in a community and applying for funding from HUD's competitive McKinney-Vento Act programs. Additionally, the CoCs must plan and be responsive to new regulations as well as existing regulations that are part of the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act. To receive HUD McKinney-Vento funding for projects and services, organizations must work through a local CoC.

Rural continua, which often have a broad and very diverse partnership base, must handle the complicated task of organizing and building capacity among their partners while still being strategic and clear about the varying roles and responsibilities of each partner. When organizing a CoC, rural continua address specific programmatic, funding, communication, and geographic constraints that more urban communities do not need to consider when providing services to individuals and families who are at risk of homelessness or who are homeless.

To receive CoC funding from HUD, all continua must conduct counts of the homeless population to help demonstrate and quantify need. Understanding the unique needs of rural communities helps the RNCOC plan and implement strategies to address these needs. It also allows the CoC to apply for and receive funding for projects and services.

The following report provides the detailed results of the RNCOC’s 2020 Point in Time (PIT) Count for the RNCOC.

OVERVIEW OF NEVADA

To better understand the RNCOC and the results of the PIT count presented in this report, it is important to recognize Nevada’s unique geographic and demographic makeup.

GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION AND POPULATION DENSITY

Nevada encompasses 109,826 square miles, making it the seventh largest state in the nation by area. Most of this land mass is found within the counties that make up the RNCOC. The majority of Nevada’s population is located in Nevada’s urban counties, in the metropolitan areas of Reno-Sparks in Washoe County and Las Vegas in Clark County. As demonstrated in Table 1, approximately 89% of Nevada’s 3,080,156¹ people reside in either Clark or Washoe counties; only 11% live within the counties that comprise the RNCOC.

With the exception of Carson City, Douglas, Lyon, and Storey counties, the other 11 counties that comprise the RNCOC are defined as “frontier” counties, meaning that they are considered remote in terms of travel time and distance from the nearest population centers.² Residents of frontier communities may face logistical hurdles when trying to access health, supportive, and other services that are more likely to be located in larger population centers and potentially quite a significant distance away. Access issues can be exacerbated for individuals experiencing homelessness who may have limited mobility and no access to personal or reliable transportation.

¹ Population estimates, July 1, 2019. QuickFacts: Nevada. United States Census Bureau.

<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/NV>

² Nevada Rural and Frontier Data Book—Ninth Edition. UNR School of Medicine- Office of Statewide Initiatives. January 2019.

TABLE 1. POPULATION DENSITY BY COUNTY IN NEVADA

County	2019 Population Estimates ³	Total Area (sq. mi.) ⁴	Population Density (pop per sq. mi.)
Clark	2,266,715	7,910	284
Carson City	55,916	143	393
Churchill	24,909	4,929	5
Douglas	48,905	710	69
Elko	52,778	17,179	3
Esmeralda	873	3,588	<1
Eureka	2,029	4,176	<1
Humboldt	16,831	9,648	2
Lander	5,532	5,494	1
Lincoln	5,183	10,634	<1
Lyon	57,510	1,994	28
Mineral	4,505	3,756	1
Nye	46,523	18,147	3
Pershing	6,725	6,037	1
Storey	4,123	263	16
White Pine	9,580	8,876	1
Washoe	471,519	6,342	74

RACE AND ETHNICITY

For the past several years, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development has produced the *CoC Analysis Tool*, which draws on American Community Survey data and past Point in Time count data to “facilitate an analysis of racial disparities among people experiencing homelessness.”⁵ In keeping with HUD’s focus on addressing racial and ethnic

³ Population estimates, July 1, 2019. QuickFacts: Nevada. United States Census Bureau. <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/NV>

⁴ Nevada Rural and Frontier Data Book—Ninth Edition. UNR School of Medicine- Office of Statewide Initiatives. January 2019.

⁵ CoC Analysis Tool: Race and Ethnicity. Published March 2020. Accessed June 8, 2020 at <https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/5787/coc-analysis-tool-race-and-ethnicity/>

inequalities, the RNCOC is providing region-level population estimates specific to race and ethnicity in Table 2, which can be used in conjunction with the 2020 PIT data presented throughout this report.

TABLE 2. POPULATION ESTIMATES BY RACE AND ETHNICITY IN THE RNCOC⁶

Race and Ethnicity	Number	Percentage
All People	329,738	100%
Race		
White	280,675	85%
Black	5,367	2%
Native American/Alaskan Native	11,808	4%
Asian/Pacific Islander	5,737	2%
Other/Multi-Racial	26,151	8%
Ethnicity		
Hispanic	59,641	18%
Non-Hispanic	270,097	82%

UNEMPLOYMENT

At the time of the PIT count in January 2020, Nevada’s unemployment rate stood at 3.6%.⁷ However, by the time of this report’s publication, unemployment in Nevada had increased to 6.3% in March 2020⁸, and as high as 28% by April⁹ as a result of business closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic. County-level data is presented in Table 3 showing similar increases between January and March (April data was not available at the time of publication).¹⁰

A common theme seen in previous PIT reports and continued in the 2020 report is that a major self-reported contributor to homelessness is lack of funds and the inability to find or retain employment. While Nevada Governor Sisolak placed a moratorium on evictions due to non-payment of rent during the COVID-19 crisis, it is possible that increases in unemployment and

⁶ As presented in the CoC Analysis Tool: Race and Ethnicity. Accessed June 8, 2020 at <https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/5787/coc-analysis-tool-race-and-ethnicity/>

⁷ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Accessed May 13, 2020 at <https://www.bls.gov/eag/eag.nv.htm>.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ “Nevada's 28.2% unemployment rate eclipses entire U.S.” Reno Gazette Journal. Accessed June 8, 2020 at <https://www.rgj.com/story/news/2020/05/22/nevada-unemployment-rate-soars-28-2-state-down-244-800-jobs/5243949002/>.

¹⁰ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Accessed May 13, 2020 at <https://data.bls.gov/lausmap/showMap.jsp>

subsequent decreases in available funds will lead to increased homelessness in the RNCoc as the pandemic continues, and that by the time of this report’s publication homelessness in Nevada will look differently than what is reported herein.

TABLE 3. UNEMPLOYMENT RATES BY COUNTY IN JANUARY 2020 AND MARCH 2020¹¹

County	January 2020 Unemployment Rate	March 2020 Unemployment Rate
Carson City	4.1%	6.7%
Churchill	3.7%	5.7%
Douglas	4.0%	6.3%
Elko	3.3%	4.9%
Esmeralda	3.8%	5.5%
Eureka	2.2%	3.8%
Humboldt	3.2%	4.9%
Lander	3.9%	5.5%
Lincoln	3.7%	5.8%
Lyon	5.0%	7.7%
Mineral	4.1%	6.3%
Nye	5.0%	7.8%
Pershing	4.0%	6.3%
Storey	3.8%	6.1%
White Pine	3.0%	4.9%

HOMELESSNESS IN RURAL NEVADA

Many of the underlying factors that cause homelessness in rural areas are no different than those in urban areas, including lack of funds, lack of appropriate and/or affordable housing options, and untreated mental health or substance misuse disorders.

Additionally, rural communities face unique challenges in addressing homelessness, such as the lack of public transportation making it difficult for people to access employment opportunities and services. Rural populations that are homeless often are “unseen” and spread out in remote locations. Although rural communities often pride themselves on “taking care of their own,” the hidden nature of rural homelessness means that the issue is most often viewed as an urban

¹¹ Bureau of Labor Statistics. <https://data.bls.gov/lausmap/showMap.jsp>

problem and overlooked in a rural context. Resources and infrastructure for providing emergency services for individuals and families who are homeless and addressing underlying issues that result in homelessness are often scarce in rural areas, and even more scarce in areas that fall in the “frontier” category. Barriers to addressing homelessness in Nevada’s rural communities are depicted in Table 4.

TABLE 4. BARRIERS TO ADDRESSING HOMELESSNESS IN RURAL NEVADA

	<p>Transportation: Large distances must be traversed to reach services that are few and far between and there are usually limited or no public transportation options available.</p>
	<p>Isolation: Rural areas can be isolating due to the counties’ expansiveness and/or sparse populations. People who are homeless often feel cut off geographically and for recently arrived immigrant populations, they can be cut off linguistically and culturally from the services that are available in the area.</p>
	<p>Shortage of Services: Few homeless-specific providers are available in most rural areas and mainstream services can be difficult to access, as they are spread over large areas and often not structured to accommodate populations who are homeless.</p>
	<p>Lack of Affordable Housing Options: Throughout the state, lack of inventory and the increasing cost of housing have emerged as serious barriers for populations who are homeless. Nevada has one of the greatest shortages of affordable housing in the nation.¹² This is reinforced as a major contributor to homelessness through interviews detailed throughout the report.</p>

These problems frequently overlap and compound challenges facing individuals and families. For example, the shortage of services nearby may mean that individuals who are homeless must travel to a neighboring community to get services they need, which can be difficult due to a lack of public transportation options. Similarly, geographic, and linguistic and/or cultural isolation of individuals who are homeless in a community may exacerbate the invisibility of the population.

The PIT count is especially important for rural counties because it quantifies a “hidden” problem that many believe only exists in urban areas. Nothing can more effectively dispel the myth that homelessness is a non-issue in rural areas than hard data to the contrary.

¹² Retrieved June 12, 2019 from: <https://nlihc.org/resource/field-nevada-advocates-urge-state-legislature-take-action-homelessness-and-housing-poverty>

CONDUCTING THE POINT IN TIME COUNT

The Point-in-Time (PIT) count is a US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) mandated count of sheltered and unsheltered people experiencing homelessness within a defined geographic area. The count is conducted on a specific night (i.e. a single “point in time”) to avoid duplicated counts. The 2020 PIT count was conducted on the night spanning January 29-30, 2020. The RNCOC has conducted a PIT count in the geographic region comprised of Nevada’s 15 rural counties annually since 2005.

The PIT count is designed to

- ✓ Measure and monitor trends and changes in homelessness on local and national levels and track progress toward ending homelessness.
- ✓ Help communities understand what resources are needed and strategize the best ways to use them to end homelessness.
- ✓ Increase awareness and collective knowledge about the problem of rural homelessness.
- ✓ Link individuals and families experiencing homelessness or at-risk of experiencing homelessness to services.

Conducting the PIT count can be particularly challenging in rural areas because individuals who are homeless are dispersed over wide geographic areas. In addition, few individuals who are qualified to conduct outreach and engage individuals and families are available within rural areas, and those that are may have limited availability due to other responsibilities within their agency. Finally, due to a scarcity of emergency shelters in rural areas, those who are homeless often live in areas that are difficult to find and/or access.

The RNCOC annual PIT Report is routinely used by other housing and homeless planning initiatives within Nevada, including:

- ⇒ *Nevada Rural Housing Authority*
- ⇒ *Nevada Housing Division*
- ⇒ *Nevada Governor’s Interagency Council on Homelessness*
- ⇒ *Cooperative Agreement to Benefit Homeless Individuals – States (CABHI-States)*
- ⇒ *Provisional Assistance Through Housing (PATH)*
- ⇒ *Community Service Block Grant (CSBG)*
- ⇒ *Local Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) efforts*

METHODOLOGY

On January 30, 2020, the RNCOC conducted the following HUD-mandated and RNCOC-selected components as part of the Point in Time count. HUD requires a count of sheltered individuals experiencing homelessness every year and a count of unsheltered individuals experiencing homelessness every two years. The RNCOC has elected to conduct the Unsheltered PIT count every year. In addition to these HUD-mandated counts, the RNCOC has also elected to conduct in-depth interviews, a motel count, and a school count each year.

Components presented below with an asterisk (*) were led and managed by leads within each county, with pre-count support and post-count data validation and analysis supported by the PIT count contractor, Social Entrepreneurs, Inc. (SEI). Components without an asterisk were led and managed by SEI, with county leads providing resources, linkages, and insights to inform data collection. An RNCOC PIT Planning Committee was convened monthly between October 2019 and January 2020 to organize efforts, develop data collection tools, and ensure continuity between count components and county activities. A complementary PIT Guide was developed via this committee and provides additional information on the methodology for each count component. The Guide was shared with count volunteers and is publicly available for review at <https://socialent.com/resources/coc-announcements/>. Online training was also offered to all count volunteers via live and recorded webinars. Topics covered in the webinars included an overview of the PIT count, descriptions of each component, training on how to use all data collection tools, and a Q&A session.

All data were collected as described below. SEI validated the data, compiled it by county, and synthesized it for this report.

Unsheltered Count* | Per HUD, CoCs must conduct an Unsheltered, or “Street”, count at least every other year; the RNCOC, like most CoCs, has elected to conduct this count annually. In 2020 this component was conducted with law enforcement, code enforcement, social service agencies, and volunteer teams to count the number of individuals and families who were experiencing homelessness and met the HUD-definition of “Unsheltered” on the night of the count. Only individuals “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” were included in the Unsheltered Count (24 CFR 578.3). Count volunteers utilized one of two methods to count individuals that were unsheltered: volunteers either engaged individuals believed to be unsheltered through a brief survey, or utilized an observation-only approach if individuals were not willing or able to participate in the survey.

For the 2020 PIT count, the RNCOC invested resources to utilize the SimTech mobile application “Counting Us” to collect the Unsheltered Count data. Count volunteers were provided online

training on how to download, set-up, and use the mobile application on the day of the count. Paper forms were also provided to teams in case of technology issues; data from all paper forms were input to the Counting Us via the desktop interface before analysis.

Sheltered Count | Per HUD, COCs must conduct a Sheltered Count annually, which counts the number of individuals residing in Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing, and Safe Haven programs on the night of the count. These data are extracted from the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and from manual counts submitted by providers not participating in the HMIS. The HMIS system in Nevada is managed by Bitfocus, who validated the Sheltered data prior to sharing it with SEI for analysis and inclusion in this report.

In-Depth Interviews with Individuals and Families* | In-depth interviews were conducted with individuals and families who were homeless or who were at-risk of homelessness on the day of the PIT count. Not all individuals interviewed met HUD's definition of homelessness on the day interviews were conducted. County leads established their own criteria for identifying appropriate interview participants, which may have included individuals experiencing homelessness, or those that have recently accessed local services to avoid homelessness. The in-depth interview is not required by HUD and differs from the Unsheltered Survey conducted as part of the Unsheltered Count, as it is designed to provide additional context and information on factors contributing to homelessness in Nevada.

Interview questions were developed by the PIT Planning Committee and provided to count volunteers via paper forms. Responses were transcribed from the paper forms to SurveyMonkey to facilitate data analysis efforts.

Motel Count* | This portion of the count was conducted in conjunction with motel owners and operators who provide shelter not meant for long-term habitation. Motel operators were provided with a hard copy of a data collection form, as well as instructions on how to complete the form, prior to the count. Count volunteers visited each motel to collect the data sheet or assist the motel owner/operator in completing the PIT count for their motel. Responses were transcribed from the paper forms to SurveyMonkey to facilitate data analysis efforts.

The Motel Count is not required by HUD, as people living in motels and those who do not meet the definition of homeless should not be included in the count. However, it is deemed important data to collect as it provides information on people who are possibly under-housed or at-risk of becoming homeless. Persons in motels using an Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) voucher or community housing voucher may be included in the Sheltered Count.

School Count | A count of children experiencing housing instability in Nevada's RNCoc school districts was also conducted. The homeless liaison for each school district in the RNCoc was contacted prior to the count and briefed on the information that would be requested. They

provided information on the number of children experiencing housing instability on the day of the count to SEI via email or a SurveyMonkey submission. All data was entered into SurveyMonkey to facilitate data analysis efforts.

The count of children attending school is not required by HUD. However, because the number of families experiencing homelessness is a growing issue, Nevada's Rural CoC has deemed it important to capture the number of children experiencing housing instability.

LIMITATIONS

The following limitations should be taken under consideration in use and interpretation of the data presented.

- ✓ **Voluntary Participation:** Participation in the Unsheltered Count Survey and In-Depth Interview, while often incentivized, was completely voluntary. Participants in some counties were provided with items such as hygiene kits, and food or other vouchers, but could opt to decline to answer any question or to decline to participate in any fashion. The Unsheltered Count allows for use of an Observation Count when individuals believed to be experiencing homelessness elect not to be surveyed, and volunteers utilize their best judgment when determining demographic factors during an observation. Volunteers were advised not to make assumptions about gender, race, ethnicity, or age unless they had a prior relationship with or knowledge of the observed individual. Therefore, not all questions were completed for each individual included in the Unsheltered Count and In-Depth interview, resulting in sample sizes of specific questions which may differ from the sample size of the overall count.
- ✓ **Extrapolation:** Sheltered and Unsheltered data gathered during the PIT count is submitted to HUD via the Homelessness Data Exchange (HDX). HUD requires the use of data extrapolation to assign values when demographic data is unknown due to a "decline to answer" or other non-response from the participant. SEI has elected to utilize the non-extrapolated data to produce this report, so variances between the HDX submission and this report may exist for some demographic factors.
- ✓ **Varied County Participation:** County participation, and type and amount of data gathered, varied significantly. Until every county participates at a baseline level by providing PIT and HIC data, a complete picture of homelessness cannot be determined across all 15 counties in the RNCOC.
- ✓ **Variance:** Insignificant variances may be seen between overall counts and County data due to unavailable or missing data at the county-level.

2020 PIT RESULTS FOR THE RNCOC

The Rural Nevada Continuum of Care (RNCOC) partners and participants conducted the Point in Time (PIT) count of homeless persons in rural Nevada on January 30, 2020.

TOTAL RESULTS

On January 30, 2020, there were **386 homeless individuals** counted throughout the 15 counties that comprise the RNCOC as part of the HUD-mandated Sheltered and Unsheltered counts. Table 5 illustrates the number of sheltered and unsheltered individuals within each county in the RNCOC. Additionally, the table summarizes by county the number of individuals that were counted as part of the Motel and School counts, as well as the number of individuals who participated in the In-Depth Interview.

A value of zero indicates that the count component was conducted within that county, but no individuals were counted, and a value of NA indicates that the specific count component was not conducted.

TABLE 5. COUNT SUMMARY BY COUNTY

County	Sheltered	Unsheltered	In-Depth Interview	Motel	School
Carson City	62	43	30	423	355
Churchill	9	24	28	4	111
Douglas	2	2	2	18	124
Elko	9	20	NA	20	143
Esmeralda	0	0	0	NA	4
Eureka	0	NA	NA	NA	7
Humboldt	12	24	NA	44	119
Lander	0	4	NA	1	19
Lincoln	0	2	NA	NA	18
Lyon	3	98	53	18	276
Mineral	0	0	0	0	38
Nye	0	71	36	0	286
Pershing	0	NA	NA	NA	35
Storey	0	1	0	NA	13
White Pine	0	0	0	NA	30
Total	97	289	149	528	1,578

SHELTERED COUNT RESULTS

There were **97 individuals counted during the sheltered count**, meaning they were enrolled in either emergency shelter or transitional housing at the time of the count. Notable demographic characteristics of those counted during the Sheltered Count include the following:

- ✓ **Households:** The Sheltered Count identified 67 households. Of these households, 54 did not include children; 13 households included children.
- ✓ **Age:** The majority (67%) are over the age of 25, but 29% (28) of sheltered individuals were determined to be under age 18 and 4% (4) were between the ages of 18-24 (total age breakdown provided in Table 6).
- ✓ **Race and Ethnicity:** The majority (73, 75%) of sheltered individuals were determined to be White (total racial and ethnic breakdown provided in Table 7).
- ✓ **Gender:** Slightly over half (50, 52%) of sheltered individuals are male, with females comprising 47% (46) and 1% (1) identifying as transgender.
- ✓ **Chronic Homelessness:** There were four individuals who met the definition of chronically homeless included in the Sheltered Count.

TABLE 6. SHELTERED INDIVIDUALS BY AGE RANGE (N= 97)

Age Range	Count	Percentage
Under 18	28	29%
18-24	4	4%
Over 25	65	67%

TABLE 7. SHELTERED INDIVIDUALS BY RACE AND ETHNICITY¹³ (N=97)

Race/Ethnicity	Count	Percentage
American Indian/Native American	7	7%
Black or African American	7	7%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	5	5%
White	73	75%
Two or more races	5	5%
Hispanic Not Hispanic	71	73%

¹³ Hispanic individuals may be of any race, so the ethnicity breakdown should be considered separate from the race breakdown.

UNSHELTERED COUNT RESULTS

There were **289 individuals who were unsheltered** counted in the RNCOC. Notable demographic characteristics of those counted during the Unsheltered Count include the following:

- ✓ **Age (n=289):** The majority (265, 92%) are over the age of 24, but 10 (3%) were transitional age youth (18-24) and 14 (5%) individuals who were unsheltered were determined to be under the age of 18. Included in the latter count is one 13-year old that was not part of a household (i.e. was an unaccompanied youth); the remaining 13 minors were part of a household that included adults. Table 8 depicts the ages of all unsheltered individuals for whom this information was available.
- ✓ **Ethnicity (n=240):** For those individuals for which ethnicity could be determined, the majority (219, 91%) were non-Hispanic or Latino. Table 9 depicts the race and ethnicity of all unsheltered individuals for whom this information was available.
- ✓ **Gender (n=281):** For those individuals for whom gender could be determined, the majority (190, 68%) were male and 91 (32%) were female.
- ✓ **Race (n=279):** For those individuals for which race could be determined, the majority (254, 91%) were White. Table 8 depicts the race and ethnicity of all individuals who were unsheltered for whom this information was available.

TABLE 8. UNSHELTERED INDIVIDUALS BY AGE

Age	Count	Percentage
Under 5	2	1%
5-12	8	3%
13-17	4	1%
18-24	10	3%
25-34	29	10%
35-44	74	26%
45-54	77	27%
55-61	44	15%
62+	41	14%

TABLE 9. UNSHELTERED INDIVIDUALS BY RACE AND ETHNICITY¹⁴

Race/Ethnicity	Count	Percentage
American Indian/Native American	9	3%
Asian	1	0%
Black or African American	5	2%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	5	2%
White	254	91%
Other	5	2%
Hispanic Not Hispanic	21 219	9% 91%

SURVEY RESULTS

Of the 289 individuals counted, 230 responded to a brief survey about their background and current challenges (answers provided below are not mutually exclusive):

- ✓ 86 reported they suffered from chronic homelessness
- ✓ 76 reported suffering from a serious mental illness, 48 reported suffering from a substance use disorder, and 25 reported a developmental disability.
- ✓ 30 reported they were veterans,
- ✓ 6 reported they were fleeing domestic violence,
- ✓ 138 reported that they had slept in an outdoor encampment (i.e. a homeless camp) the night before. This number was combined with observations of the sleeping location of individuals who did not participate in the survey (5) for a total of 143 and is summarized in Table 10 by county.

TABLE 10. OBSERVED AND SURVEYED INDIVIDUALS LIVING IN HOMELESS CAMPS

County	Number of Individuals Residing in Homeless Camps	County	Number of Individuals Residing in Homeless Camps
Carson City	11	Churchill	13
Elko	11	Lyon	57
Humboldt	7	Nye	44

¹⁴ Hispanic individuals may be of any race, so the ethnicity breakdown should be considered separate from the race breakdown.

MOTEL COUNT

Nine counties in the RNCoc reported on whether people were living in motels in their county on the night of the PIT count, as demonstrated in Table 11. When possible, individuals living in motels were categorized either as “at-risk of homelessness” or “living in a motel due to a lack of housing in the city”. These options are considered mutually exclusive, and if information on their reasons for living in a motel were unclear the individual was not counted in either category but was included in the total.

There were 528 individuals counted in the motel count with Carson City having the highest number of individuals counted (423). Some counties do not report motel data because the motel count is a voluntary process and/or they may not have weekly motels in the area. Mineral County and Nye County did report but found no individuals living in motels within the county.

TABLE 11. NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS LIVING IN MOTELS BY COUNTY AND REASON

County	Total	At-Risk of Homelessness or Experiencing Homelessness	Living in a Motel Due to Lack of Housing in the City
Carson City	423	NA	NA
Churchill	4	4	0
Douglas	18	NA	NA
Elko	20	18	2
Humboldt	44	43	1
Lander	1	1	0
Lyon	18	7	11
Mineral	0	0	0
Nye	0	0	0
Total	528	73	14

Notable demographic characteristics of those counted in the Motel Count include the following:

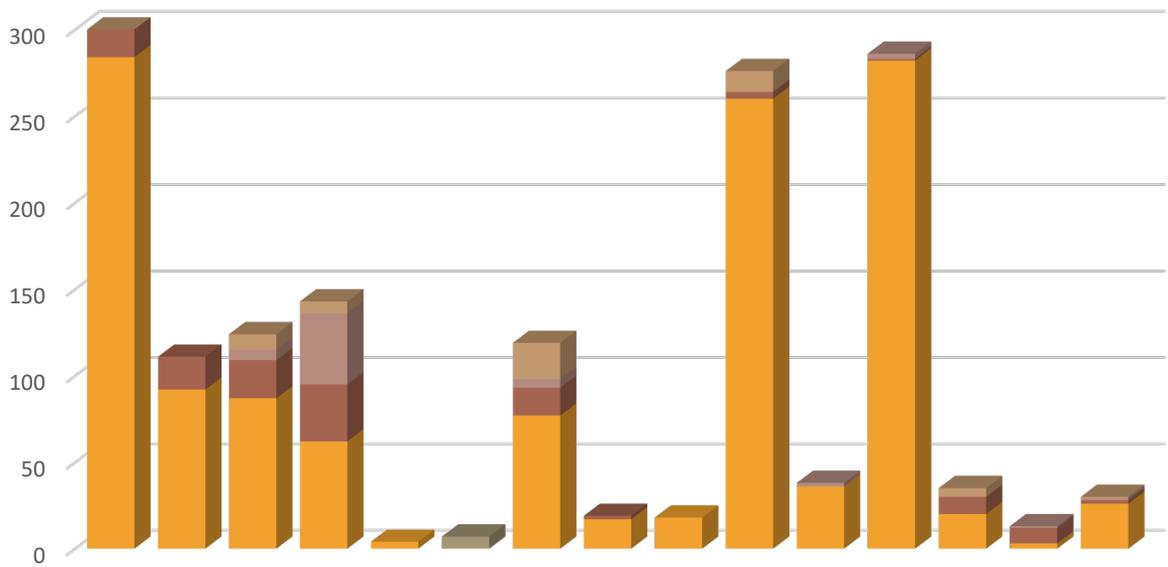
- ✓ **Households:** The majority of individuals (463) lived in households comprised only of themselves or other adults (individuals over 18). A total of 32 adults live in households with 33 children, and no individuals live in households comprised only of children (individuals under 18 years of age).
- ✓ **Age:** 33 children (individuals under 18 years of age) were reported as living in motels during this count. All 33 children were counted as part of households that included adults. In other words, none of these children were living in a household with no adult presence. Of the 495 adults living in motels, 95 (19%) are considered transition-aged youth between the ages of 18 and 24.
- ✓ **Length of Stay:** 283 individuals were reported as residing in a motel for at least a year and considered “long-term residents”. Of these, 272 were in a household with only themselves or other adults, and 11 were part of households that included children. All individuals not reported as staying in a motel for at least a year (245) were assumed not to be long-term residents.
- ✓ **Source of Room Payment:** 385 residents indicated that they paid for the motel room themselves, while 49 indicated that their stay was paid by a voucher or agency. The payer was unknown for the remaining 94 individuals.

SCHOOL COUNT

Although the US Department of Education and HUD have differing definitions of homelessness, the RNCoc recognized **1,578 children across 15 counties who experienced housing instability or insecurity in January 2020**. Carson City, Nye, and Lyon had the most children who were experiencing housing insecurity or instability, with 355, 286, and 276, respectively.

The School Count also tracks the types of insecurity that children are experiencing. These comprise doubled-up, wherein families share the housing of other persons and likely do not have legal rights or a lease to ensure their continued housing, as well as children living in a hotel or motel, in a shelter (which also includes transitional housing and in some cases waiting for foster care), and unsheltered. These are summarized by county in Figure 1 and Table 12.

FIGURE 1 AND TABLE 12. NUMBER OF CHILDREN EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS BY COUNTY AND TYPE OF HOMELESSNESS



	Carson	Churchill	Douglas	Elko	Esmeralda	Eureka	Humboldt	Lander	Lincoln	Lyon	Mineral	Nye	Pershing	Storey	White Pine	Total
Doubled-Up	284	92	87	62	4		77	17	18	260	36	282	20	3	26	1,268
Hotel/Motel	45	19	22	33			16	2		4		1	10	9	2	163
Sheltered	21		6	41			5				2	3		1	1	80
Unsheltered	5		9	7			21			12			5		1	60
Other						7										7
Total	355	111	124	143	4	7	119	19	18	276	38	286	35	13	30	1,578

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW RESULTS

In-depth interviews were conducted with 149 individuals who were homeless or at risk of becoming homeless during the PIT count to provide a snapshot of the circumstances and needs of individuals experiencing housing instability. Interview participants may also have been counted in the Sheltered or Unsheltered count, but the In-Depth Interview requested much more comprehensive information from participants. Nine counties conducted these interviews on January 30, 2020 as detailed in Table 13. A value of 0 in the total column indicates the interview component was attempted but no one was available to participate; a value of NA indicates that the In-Depth Interview component of the count was not conducted.

TABLE 13. NUMBER OF INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED BY PARTICIPATING COUNTY¹⁵

County	Total number of interviews conducted	Interviews with individuals experiencing homelessness for the first time		Interviews with individuals who have experienced homelessness more than once	
Carson	30	7	23%	20	67%
Churchill	28	11	39%	15	54%
Douglas	2	1	50%	1	50%
Elko	NA	-	-	-	-
Esmeralda	0	0	0	0	0
Eureka	NA	-	-	-	-
Humboldt	NA	-	-	-	-
Lander	NA	-	-	-	-
Lincoln	NA	-	-	-	-
Lyon	53	15	28%	35	66%
Mineral	0	0	0	0	0
Nye	36	13	36%	15	42%
Pershing	NA	-	-	-	-
Storey	0	0	0	0	0
White Pine	0	0	0	0	0
Total	149	47	32%	86	58%

¹⁵ Number of times experiencing homelessness could not be determined for all individuals so percentages may not equal 100%.

The following section summarizes the responses given that are most likely to help assess need and impact service delivery but is not inclusive of all questions asked or responses given. Topics explored within this section include:

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| ✓ Number of Times Homelessness Experienced | ✓ Demographics |
| ✓ Employment History | ✓ Funding and Income Sources |
| ✓ Most Recent Shelter Utilized | ✓ Barriers to Permanent Housing |
| ✓ Reasons for Homelessness | ✓ Risk Factors |
| ✓ Top Services Needed | ✓ Top Services Received |

Whenever possible, the following data is presented summatively for the entire group of participants, as well as split out based on the number of times respondents have experienced homelessness (first time homelessness and repeated homelessness, described in more detail in the next section). Intergroup differences have not been assessed for statistical significance, but data is presented in this way to help stakeholders identify trends that may allow for improved service delivery to the different groups.

NUMBER OF TIMES HOMELESSNESS EXPERIENCED

Participants were initially asked whether their current situation was the first time they have experienced homelessness. Interviewees were then asked, inclusive of the current time, how many separate times they have stayed in shelters or on the streets in the past three years.

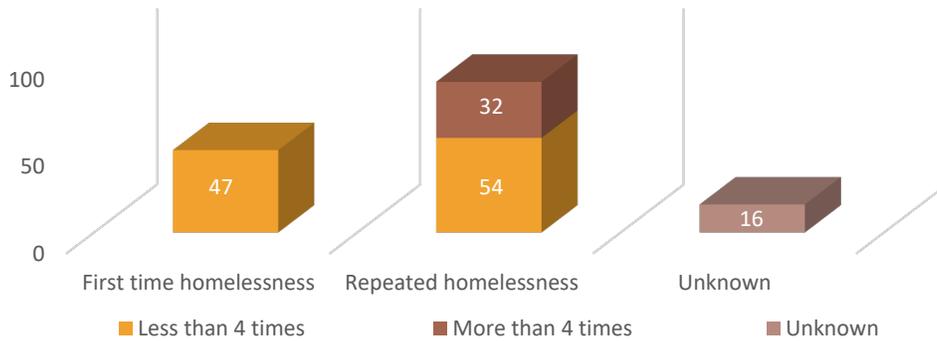
Participants were clustered into the following groups based on their answers:

- ✓ **First time experiencing homelessness (FTH):** These individuals indicated this is the first time they have experienced homelessness (47).
- ✓ **Repeated homelessness (RH):** These individuals noted that this is not the first time they have experienced homelessness (86). Of those that indicated they have experienced repeated homelessness, 32 individuals further indicated they have stayed in shelters or on the streets four or more times in the past three years.¹⁶
- ✓ **Unknown (UN):** Individuals were placed within this group due to conflicting responses between the initial and follow-up question, or because no response was given (16).

¹⁶ Note that these 32 respondents may not meet the HUD definition of a chronically homeless individual, defined as “either (1) an unaccompanied homeless individual with a disabling condition who has been continuously homeless for a year or more, OR (2) an unaccompanied individual with a disabling condition who has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years.” From *Defining Chronic Homelessness: A Technical Guide for HUD Programs*. Published September 2017 and accessed June 8, 2020 at

<https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/DefiningChronicHomeless.pdf>

FIGURE 2. INDIVIDUALS BY NUMBER OF HOMELESSNESS EXPERIENCES (N=149)

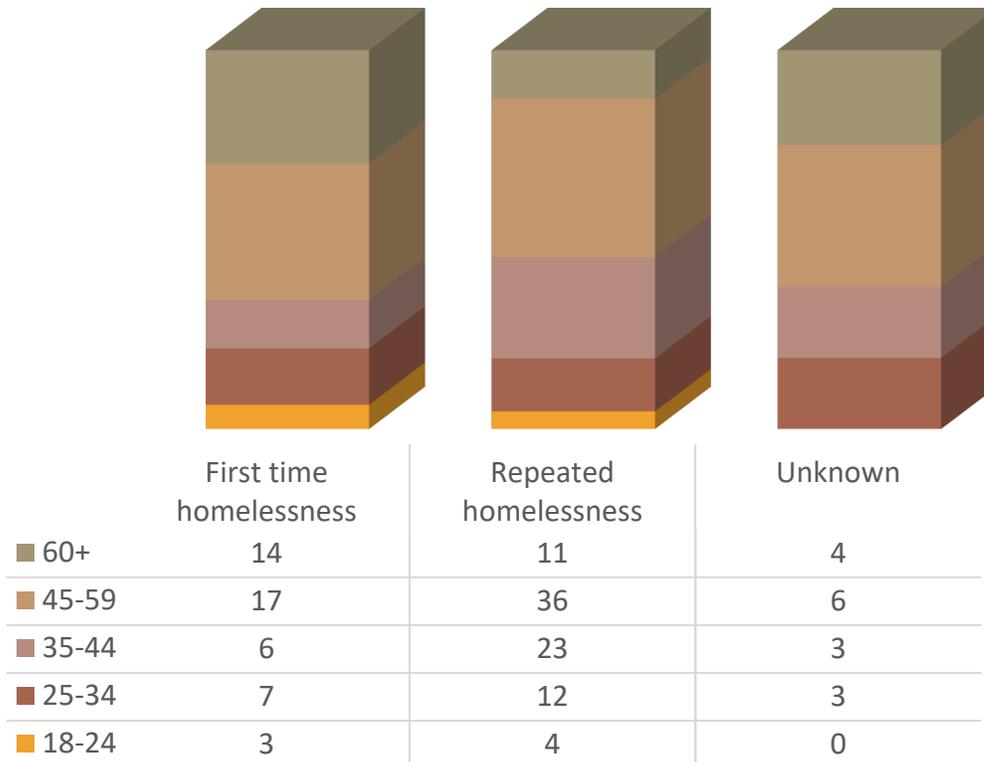


DEMOGRAPHICS

Age

Individuals 45-59 years old comprised the largest age group interviewed (59, 40%), followed by ages 35-44 (32, 21%), over 60 (29, 19%), 25-34 (22, 15%), and 18-24 (7, 5%). No children under age 18 were interviewed.

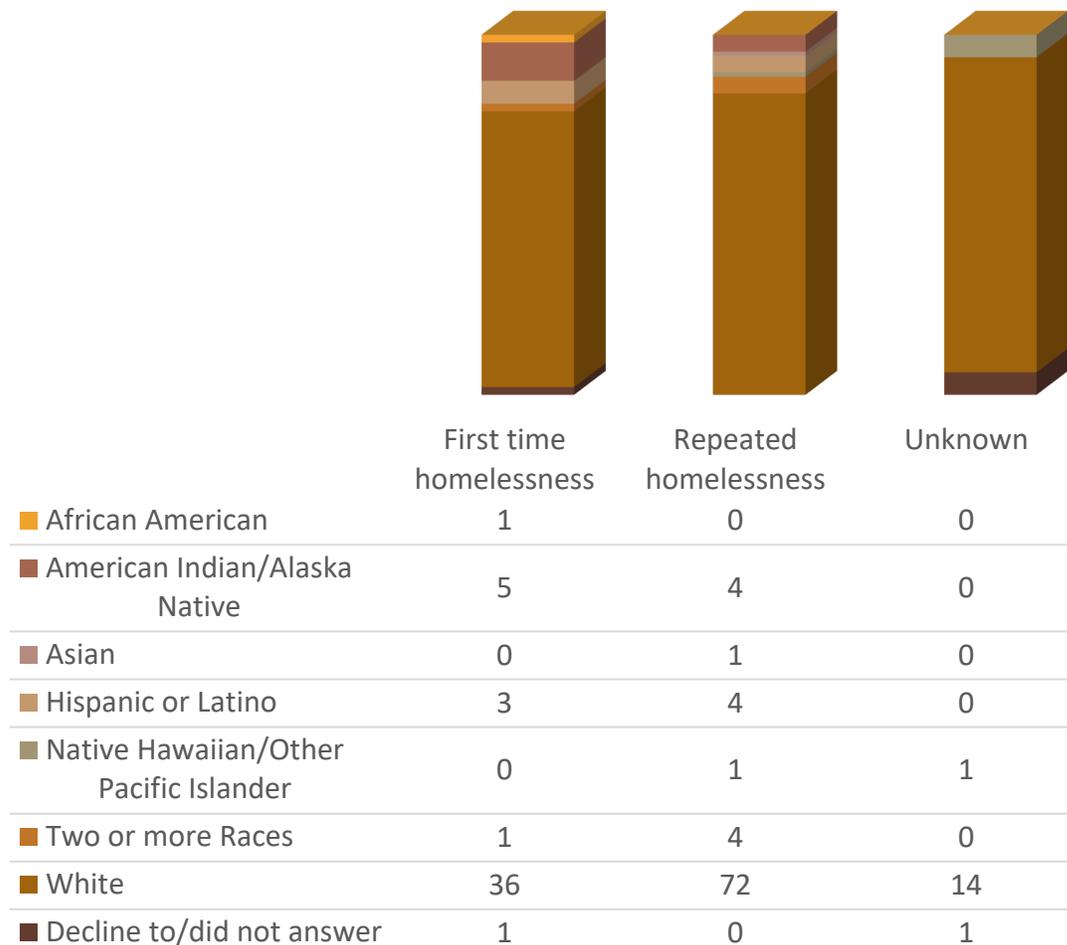
FIGURE 3. AGE OF INDIVIDUALS BY NUMBER OF HOMELESSNESS EXPERIENCES (N=149)



Race and Ethnicity

White individuals comprised the majority of interviewees (122, 82%), followed by American Indian/Alaska Native (9, 6%), Hispanic or Latino¹⁷ (7, 5%), multiracial (5, 3%), Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander (2, 1%), and African American and Asian both at 1, or <1%. Two individuals declined to state their race or ethnicity.

FIGURE 4. ETHNICITY OF INDIVIDUALS BY NUMBER OF HOMELESSNESS EXPERIENCES (N=149)

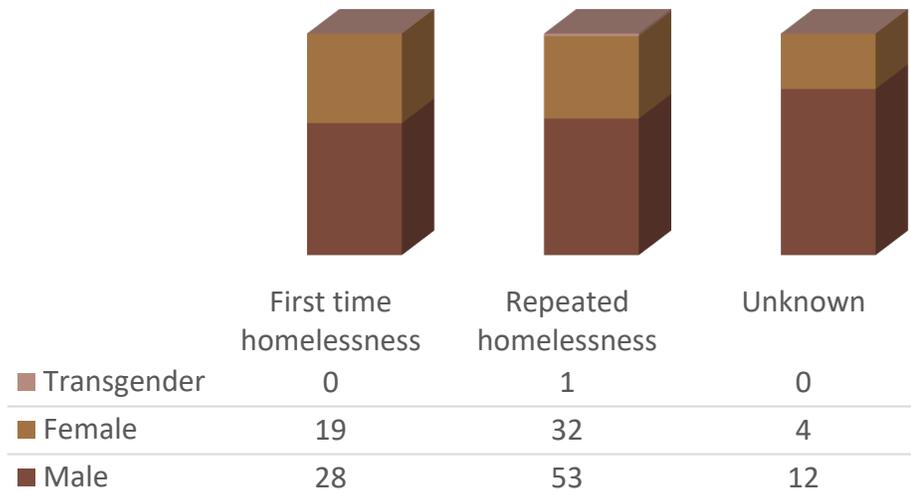


¹⁷ Unlike in the Sheltered and Unsheltered counts, in the In-Depth Interview Hispanic or Latino ethnicity was not a separate question from other for race and ethnicity.

Gender

Of those interviewed, over half were male (93, 62%). 55 were female, comprising 37% of the total sample, and one individual identified as transgender.

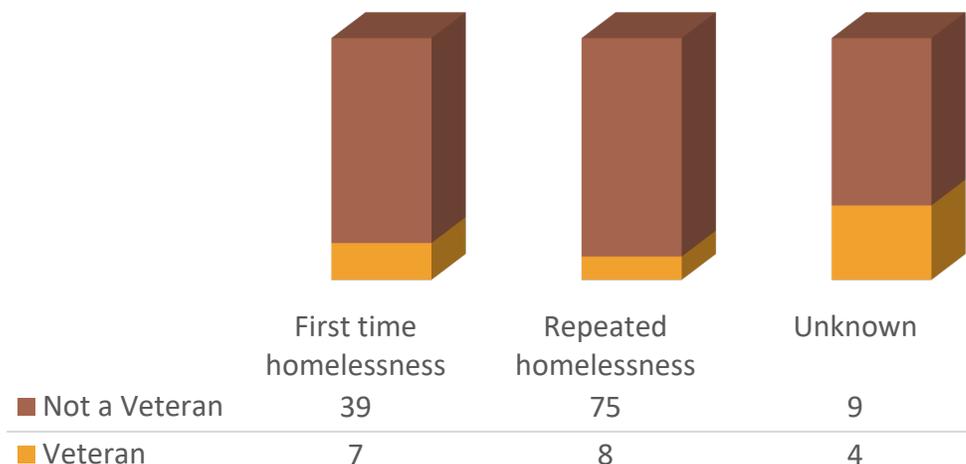
FIGURE 5. GENDER OF INDIVIDUALS BY NUMBER OF HOMELESSNESS EXPERIENCES (N=149)



Veteran Status

Not all participants responded to this question, but 19 individuals (13% of respondents to this question) reported that they had served in the U.S. Armed Forces, with seven noting this was their first time experiencing homelessness, while eight indicated they had experienced homelessness previously.

FIGURE 6. VETERAN STATUS BY NUMBER OF HOMELESSNESS EXPERIENCES (N=142)



CURRENT EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Participants were asked if they were currently employed or unemployed. Of the 141 individuals for whom this information was available, 132 respondents indicated that they were currently unemployed (94%). Only 9 individuals (6%) indicated that they were currently employed.¹⁸ No substantial differences were seen in current employment status between the FTH and RH groups, with both groups showing approximately 13 times as many individuals unemployed as employed.

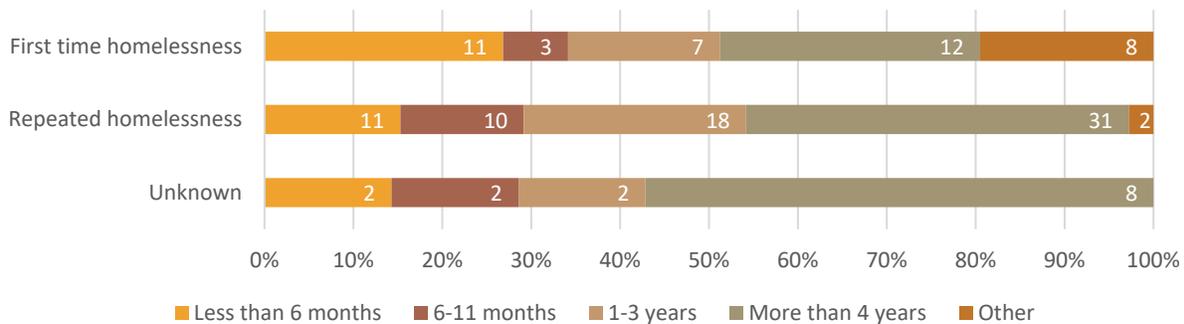
FIGURE 7. EMPLOYMENT STATUS BY NUMBER OF HOMELESSNESS EXPERIENCES (N=141)



LENGTH OF UNEMPLOYMENT

For those that reported being unemployed and answered a follow-up question regarding their unemployment (n=127), the majority had been without a job for over a year (78, 61%). For those who answered Other, respondents clarified that they were either retired (4), disabled (4), unsure (1), or had only worked temporary jobs (1). Slight differences were seen in the lengths of unemployment between groups, specifically with the FTH group showing a larger proportion of short-term unemployment than the other groups, as demonstrated in Figure 8.

FIGURE 8. LENGTH OF UNEMPLOYMENT BY NUMBER OF HOMELESSNESS EXPERIENCES (N=127)



¹⁸ 4 individuals were removed from this count due to conflicting answers and/or non-responses.

EMPLOYMENT TYPE PRIOR TO JOB LOSS

Participants were asked to share what type of job they had worked immediately prior to losing employment.¹⁹

TABLE 14. EMPLOYMENT TYPE PRIOR TO JOB LOSS



In addition to the industries above in Table 14, other industries and positions cited include administrative, agriculture, automotive, engineering, handyman, healthcare, education, and social services.

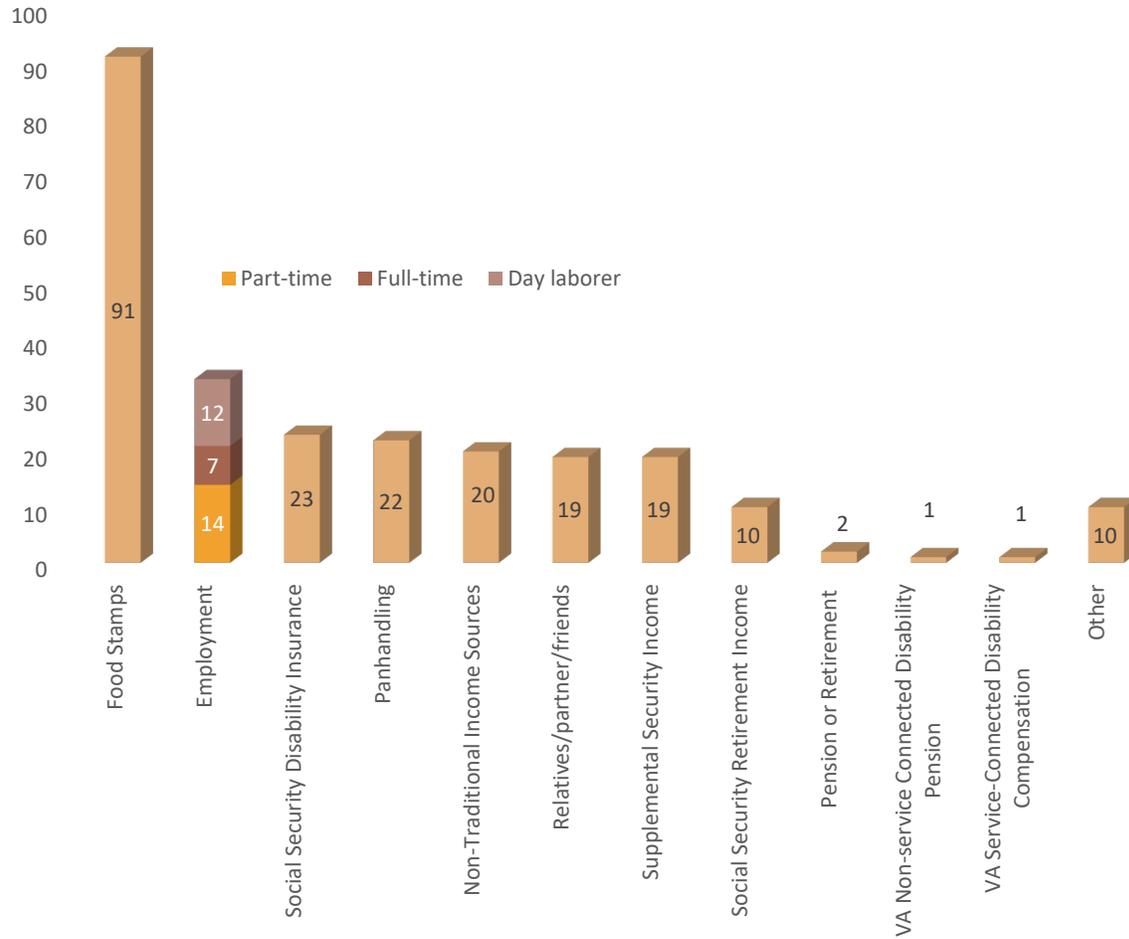
FUNDING SOURCES AND INCOME

Participants were asked to describe any sources of income they utilized within the past six months. Most respondents (80) indicated they had accessed multiple sources of income within this timeframe. 63 indicated that they have had one income source, and six did not note any income sources.

All sources of income noted by interviewees are presented in Figure 9, in descending order of mention. “Other” responses were coded to an existing category if possible; answers that could not be coded comprise Good Samaritans/Churches/FISH (3), Medicaid (2), art (1), inheritance (1), promo from a casino (1), unspecified state aid (1), and under the table farming (1).

¹⁹ Note that this question is independent of other questions related to employment, and so “n”s may not match previous sections that explored this topic.

FIGURE 9. SOURCES OF INCOME UTILIZED BY INDIVIDUALS INTERVIEWED



When combined, government funding (food stamps, Social Security, VA benefits, etc.) is the most cited source of income. Employment (comprising full-time, part-time, and day-labor work) is the next most cited source of income with 33 mentions.

MOST RECENT HOUSING/SHELTER UTILIZED

Participants were asked to describe where they had slept the previous night. The two most cited responses were camping or in their car (40%) and utilizing an RV or trailer (16%). The majority of interview participants that responded to this question would be considered “unsheltered,” with those indicating their sleeping location as camping or in the car, unsheltered, abandoned building, or shed totaling 54%. While this data was collected in January 2020, HUD issued guidance on March 26, 2020 for “Protecting Health and Well-being of People in Encampments During an Infection Disease Outbreak.” It provides guidance for safely conducting outreach and suggests protocols the CoC should adopt during the COVID-19 pandemic.

TABLE 15. MOST RECENT HOUSING/SHELTERED UTILIZED (N=147)

Type of Housing/Shelter Utilized	Count	Percentage
Camping or in the car	58	40%
RV/trailer	24	16%
Emergency Shelter	18	12%
Unsheltered: on the street, under a bridge, by the river, etc.	17	12%
Family or friends	11	7%
Treatment/rehabilitation center	7	5%
Church	4	3%
Abandoned building	2	1%
Transitional Housing	2	1%
Hotel/motel	2	1%
Shed	1	1%
Jail	1	1%

REASONS FOR HOMELESSNESS

Participants were asked two questions to help determine reasons why homelessness was being experienced. The first allowed participants to provide an open-ended response to describe why they are experiencing homelessness and is summarized in Table 16. The second, more specific question, asked participants to select from a provided list of barriers preventing them from living in permanent housing (summarized in Figure 10).

Cited Reasons for Homelessness

The top reasons cited for homelessness are detailed below. Participants provided open-ended responses to the question “in your own words, please describe why you are experiencing homelessness?”, which were then categorized. Since interviewees often noted multiple reasons for their current living situation, and not all interviewees responded to this question, the number of responses will not match the total participant count of 149. Responses are also broken out by the number of homelessness experiences of the respondent to provide inter-group comparisons, although caution should be taken when making comparisons due to the small sample sizes. Individuals in the unknown group were included in the total, but not split out for further analysis.

TABLE 16. MOST COMMONLY CITED REASONS FOR HOMELESSNESS

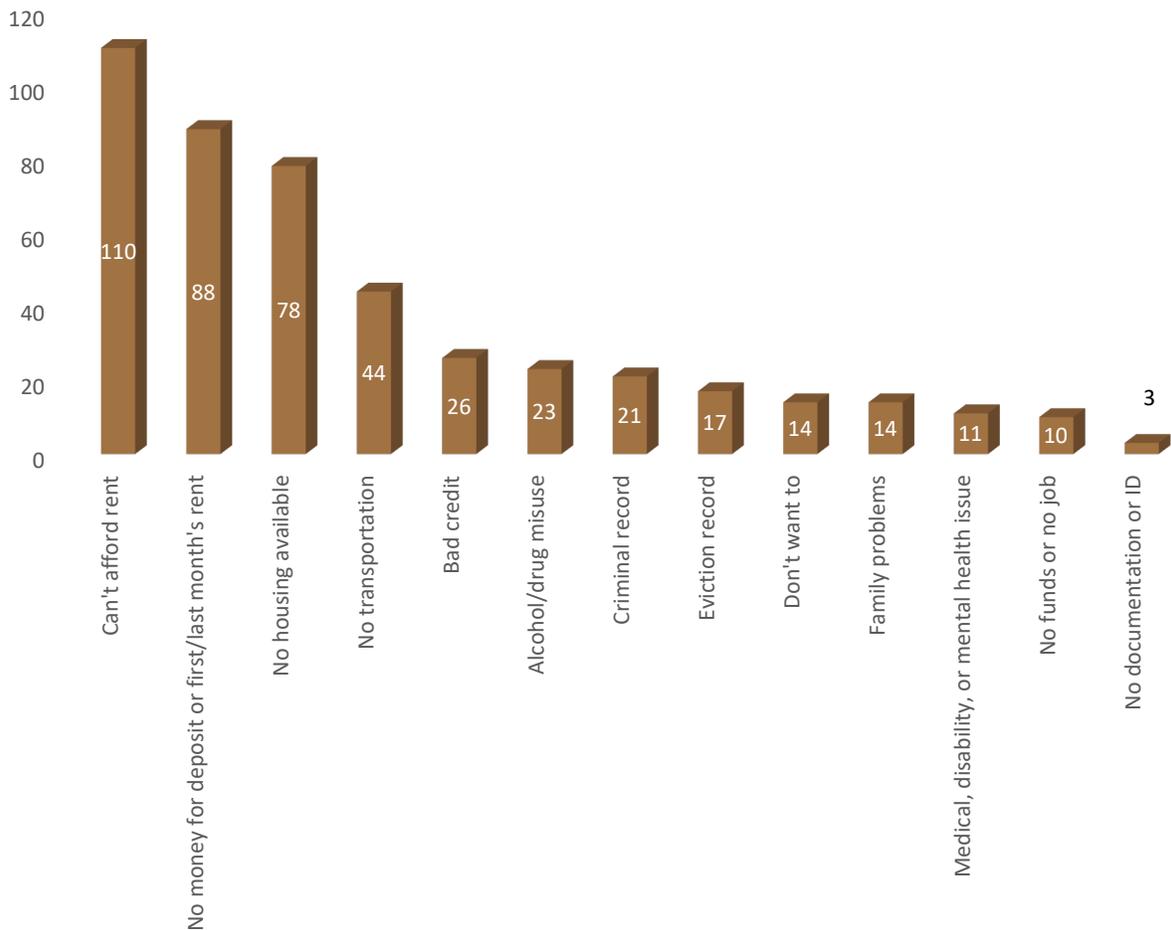
Reason	Total Responses	Responses from FTH	Responses from RH
Lack of funds	35	10	20
Cannot find job/lost job	26	7	18
No affordable housing available	24	8	15
Kicked out of housing/ended relationship/housing provider passed away	23	9	11
Medical/disability issue	16	7	9
Substance misuse	13	4	8
By choice	10	3	7
Criminal/legal issues	9	3	4
Mental health issues	7	4	2
No documentation	4	0	4
No transportation	4	2	1
Past rental/eviction history	5	2	3
Bad decisions/choices	3	0	2
Family issues	3	1	2
Ran away	1	0	1

As in past years, financial reasons (lack of funds and the inability to find a job) were cited as top reasons why individuals interviewed were experiencing homelessness, regardless of grouping. The lack of affordable housing also continues to be a major contributor to homelessness, both for those individuals experiencing it for the first time and those who have experienced it multiple times.

BARRIERS TO PERMANENT HOUSING

The majority of respondents to this question (123) cited more than one barrier to accessing permanent housing, and therefore the totals in Figure 10 exceed the participant count of 149. Financial barriers (can't afford rent and no money for deposit or first/last month's rent) comprised the two most cited reasons why participants could not access permanent housing. Lack of housing was the third most commonly cited barrier, followed closely by no transportation. The inability to afford rent and no housing available being cited as the top two barriers mirrors the responses given to the open-ended question summarized in Table 16, and speaks to the current availability, or lack thereof, of affordable housing in rural Nevada. Very few individuals (14) indicated that they did not want to access permanent housing.

FIGURE 10. CITED BARRIERS TO PERMANENT HOUSING



RISK FACTORS

Interviewees were also asked about circumstances that might put them or their families more at-risk without secure housing, including disability status; mental health issues; identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT); pregnancy; the presence of children within the household; and substance misuse issues. Table 17 details the number of individuals that cited each risk factor (note that responses are not mutually exclusive).

TABLE 17. IDENTIFIED RISK FACTORS

Children in the Household	15 individuals disclosed that they lived in a household with children, accounting for a total of 29 children experiencing homelessness.
Disability	87 individuals indicated that they are living with a disability, and specified the following conditions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developmental or cognitive disability: 9 • Mental health condition: 65, of which only 23 noted that they were currently receiving assistance with or treatment for a mental health disorder • Physical/medical disability: 60
LGBT	2 individuals disclosed that they identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender.
Pregnancy	1 individual disclosed that they were currently pregnant.
Substance Misuse	37 individuals disclosed that they have a substance use disorder, of which 17 noted that they are currently in treatment.

SERVICES RECEIVED AND NEEDED

Participants were asked to note which services they have received, as well as those they needed but did not receive, within the last month. Results of all answers are presented in Table 18 to give a holistic picture of need within rural Nevada. The top services within each category are distinguished with an asterisk (*).

By far, the greatest need identified (including individuals currently in need of, on the wait list for, or denied access to) was unsurprisingly related to housing. When combined, the need for

permanent, affordable housing; transitional housing; Section 8 vouchers; and rental assistance far outweighed any other categories. This underscores the lack of affordable housing throughout the RNCOC. Basic needs, such as hot meals, healthcare, and showers, was the next most requested service grouping.

TABLE 18. SERVICES RECEIVED AND NEEDED WITHIN ONE MONTH OF INTERVIEW

Service	Received	Need	Waiting List	Denied	Total
Alcohol/Drug Rehab	17	13	1	1	32
Affordable Permanent Housing	0	*84	*13	1	*98
Case Management	*40	41	0	0	*81
Child Care Services	1	2	0	0	3
Counseling	21	31	0	0	52
Dental Care	16	*51	0	0	67
Domestic Violence Shelter	3	3	1	0	7
Drop-in Center	16	36	0	1	53
Food/Hot Meals	*70	39	0	0	*109
Health Care	*54	30	0	0	*84
Job Help/Employment Assistance	11	39	0	1	51
Medication	*43	24	0	0	67
Rental Assistance	2	*66	*3	*2	73
Resource Computer	14	23	0	0	37
Respite Care	1	3	0	1	5
Section 8 (Housing vouchers)	6	*66	*7	*2	*81
Senior Services	9	6	0	1	16
Shelter	17	29	0	0	46
Shelter Plus Care	2	19	1	0	22
Showers	*49	43	0	0	*92
Transitional Housing	5	36	*2	0	43
Transportation Assistance	16	*52	0	0	68
Other	28	14	0	1	43

INTERVIEW THEMES

The following themes were seen throughout participant responses:

- ✓ Financial issues and unemployment are a common thread throughout the interview responses, with lack of funds and inability to find a job being cited in a variety of ways as a cause of homelessness and barrier to securing permanent housing.
- ✓ Lack of transportation options is a systematic issue in rural Nevada, and is negatively impacting the ability of individuals to seek and retain permanent housing, as access to transportation is noted both as a barrier to permanent housing and a highly sought after service that respondents note they are not receiving.
- ✓ The majority of respondents were unemployed, and government assistance was the most commonly cited source of income utilized by participants.
- ✓ Assistance accessing transitional or permanent affordable housing, and other rental assistance, was the most commonly cited service needed at the time of interview.
- ✓ It is important to note that all the respondents are likely eligible for Medicaid; however, 30 respondents indicated they needed but had not received health care. This, linked with the 41 individuals who indicated they needed but had not received case management, is a theme of concern.

COMPARISON TO PREVIOUS YEARS' PIT COUNTS

The following graphics detail change over time regarding homelessness in rural Nevada. Whenever possible, county data has been aggregated to illustrate trends over a ten-year time period; shorter time spans indicate that data was not available prior to the first year presented in the graph.

FIGURE 11. NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS COUNTED IN UNSHELTERED COUNT 2011-2020

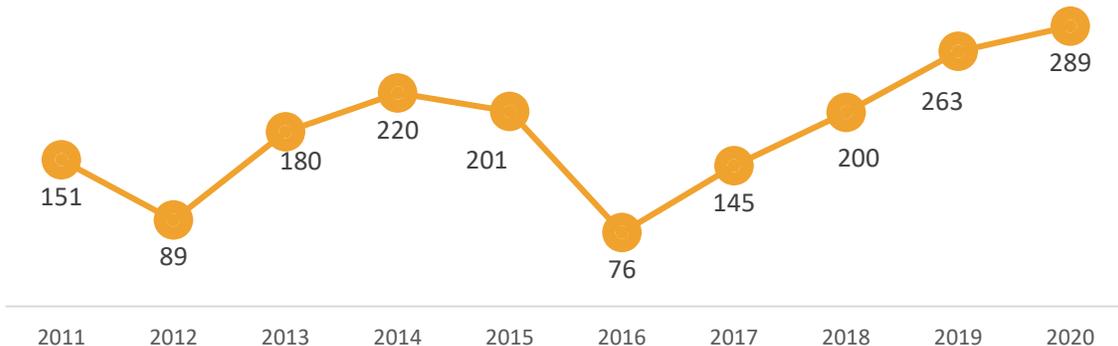
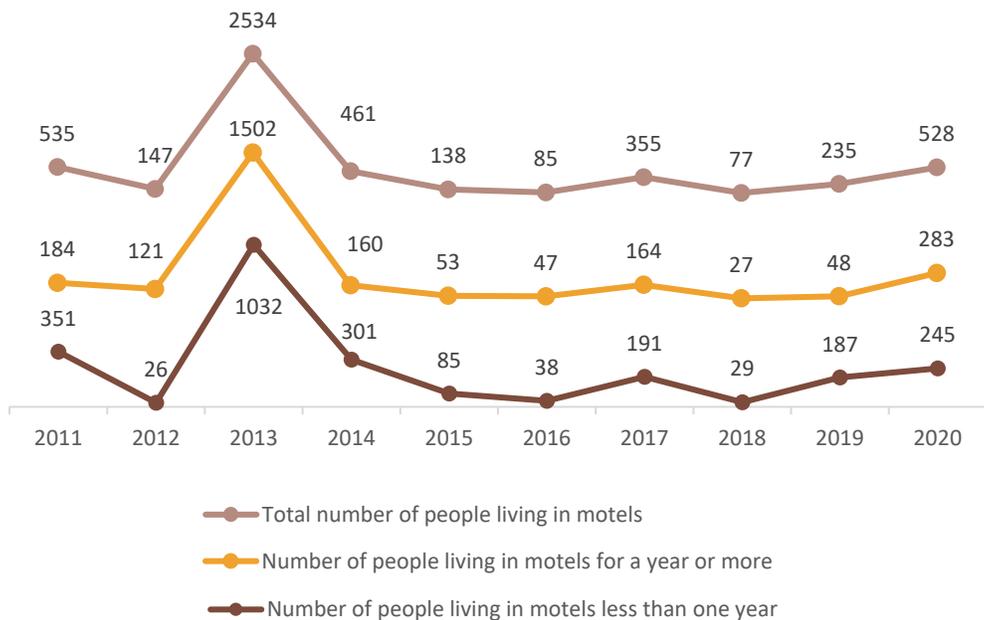


FIGURE 12. MOTEL RESIDENTS 2011-2020²⁰



²⁰ All individuals not identified as living in a motel for a year or more were counted as “living in a motel for less than one year”.

FIGURE 13. NUMBER OF HOMELESS INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED 2011-2020

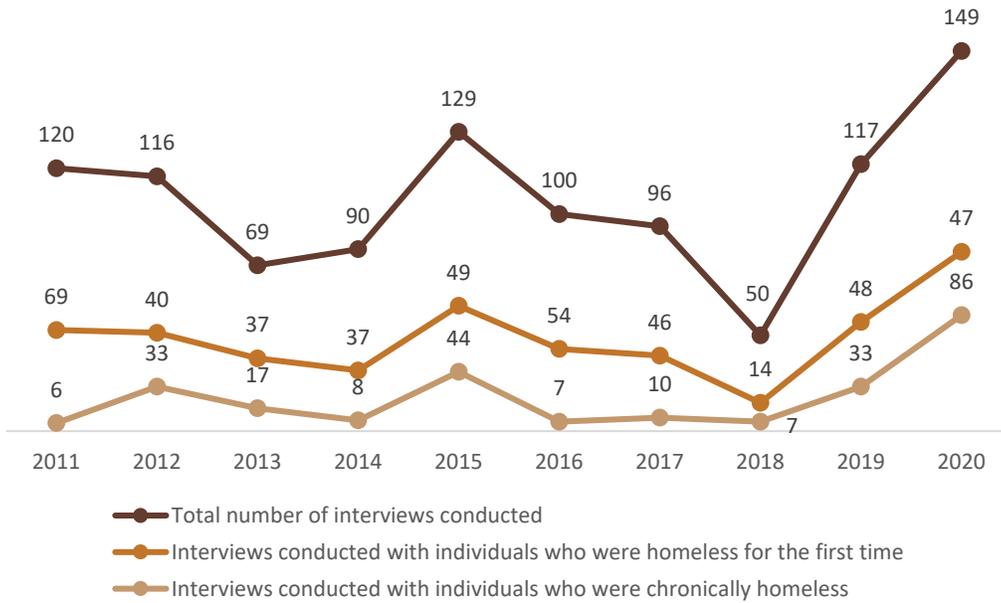


FIGURE 14: CHILDREN COUNTED AS HOMELESS IN SCHOOL COUNT 2011-2020

