

# Single Night Count of People Experiencing Homelessness

## 2018 Minnesota Homeless Study Fact Sheet

Every three years, Wilder Research conducts a one-day statewide study to better understand the prevalence of homelessness in Minnesota, as well as the circumstances of those experiencing homelessness. The 2018 study took place on October 25, 2018, and included two components that captured information on that date: 1) face-to-face interviews with people throughout the state who meet a [federal definition of homelessness](#), and 2) a count of people experiencing homelessness. Because point-in-time counts and surveys can never completely include all people experiencing homelessness, especially those not using shelters, the numbers represented in this fact sheet should be considered a minimum count.

### Initial observations

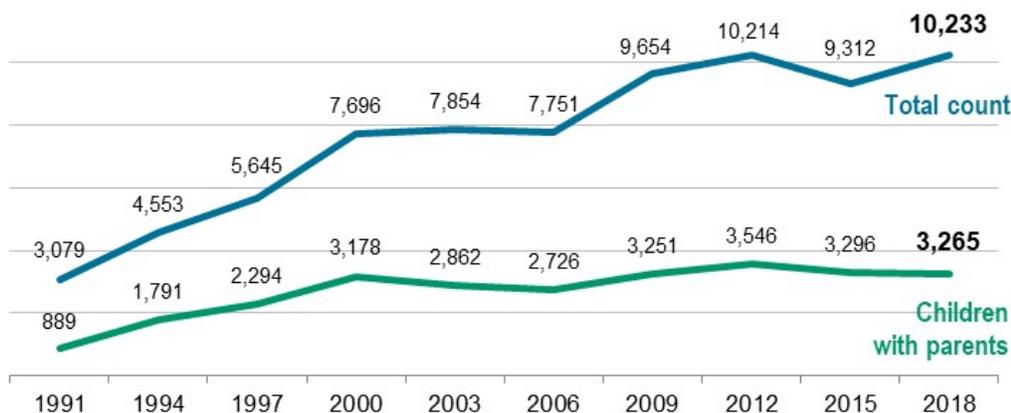
- After a decline between 2012 and 2015, the overall number of people experiencing homelessness increased to peak 2012 levels (up 10% over 2015).
- The numbers of homeless children and youth age 24 and younger are similar to levels counted in 2015; together, they represent nearly half of the homeless population (46%).
- The number of families experiencing homelessness decreased by 5% (down to 1,472 in 2018).
- The number of homeless adults increased from 2015, particularly among those 55 and older (up 25%).
- The number of people not in a formal shelter (outside or doubled up) increased considerably since 2015 (up 62%).

This fact sheet highlights initial observations from the counts data only, which include:

- All people staying in emergency shelters, domestic violence shelters, and transitional housing programs (referred to as “in shelter” in this summary).
- People located outside, doubled up, and identified through interviews in outreach locations such as encampments, hot-meal programs, and other drop-in service sites (referred to as “not in a formal shelter” in this summary).

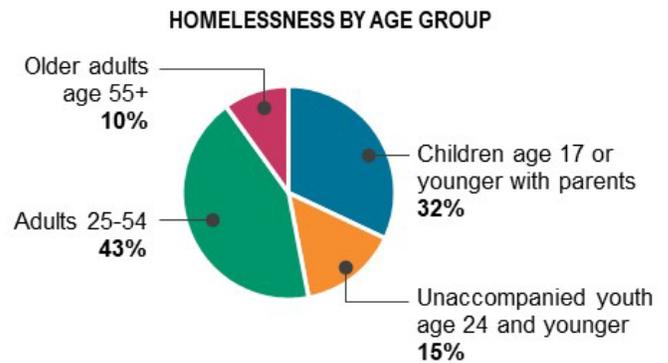
The overall number of people experiencing homelessness is up 10 percent from 2015.

ONE-NIGHT STUDY COUNTS OF THE MINNESOTA HOMELESS POPULATION, 1991-2018



**Overall, the number of children and youth age 24 and younger experiencing homelessness remained steady.**

- Together, children and unaccompanied youth (age 24 and younger) make up nearly half of those experiencing homelessness (46%).
- Since 2015, there was a 1% decrease in the number of children homeless with their parents.
- There was a 1% increase in the number of homeless youth (age 24 and younger) on their own (without their parents).
- While their numbers remained steady, children and youth are the most disproportionately affected by homelessness (relative to their population in Minnesota).



**2015 AND 2018 COUNTS BY AGE GROUP**

	2015 study	2018 study	% change (2015-2018)
Children (17 and younger) with parents	3,296	3,265	-1%
Youth on their own (24 and younger)	1,463	1,484	+1%
Adults (25-54)	3,637	4,382	+20%
Older adults (55 and older)	843	1,054	+25%
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,312</b>	<b>10,233</b>	<b>+10%</b>

Note. Totals include people experiencing homelessness (of unknown age) in detox on the night of the survey (73 in 2015 and 48 in 2018).

**The number of adults, especially older adults, has increased considerably since 2015.**

- Older adults make up 10% of the homeless population in Minnesota.
- While, proportionally, older adults (55 and older) make up the smallest age group of those experiencing homelessness, they saw the biggest increase in homelessness (up 25% from 2015).
- Similarly, the number of homeless adults age 25-54 is up 20%.

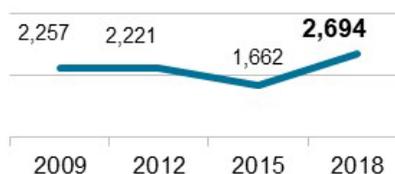
**Between 2015 and 2018, there was a considerable increase in the number of people experiencing homelessness who were not in a formal shelter.**

Most people who were interviewed in outreach locations had spent time staying in a variety of locations throughout the month of the study. The majority of these were in unsheltered locations such as encampments, in their cars, or riding public transportation. Many piece together night-to-night accommodations, which may include staying with others doubled up or couch hopping.

It is impossible to identify all people experiencing homelessness who are not in a formal shelter. These numbers can be impacted by variations in outreach efforts and the visibility of the population. The 2018 study was conducted in conjunction with increased visibility of people staying in encampments and on public transportation. In addition, there were homeless outreach events conducted throughout the state that also allowed access to those not staying in shelter.

- In the 2018 study, 26% of people experiencing homelessness were not in a formal shelter.
- The number of people not in a formal shelter increased 62% between 2015 and 2018.
- The number of people not in a formal shelter increased in every age group reported in the table below.

**COUNTS OF THOSE NOT IN A FORMAL SHELTER (OUTSIDE OR DOUBLED UP), 2009-2018**



**2015 AND 2018 COUNTS OF THOSE NOT IN A FORMAL SHELTER (OUTSIDE OR DOUBLED UP), BY AGE GROUP**

	2015 study	2018 study	% change (2015-2018)
Children (17 and younger) with parents	264	413	+56%
Youth on their own (24 and younger)	455	506	+11%
Adults (25-54)	761	1,488	+96%
Older adults (55 and older)	182	287	+58%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,662</b>	<b>2,694</b>	<b>+62%</b>

### Homelessness increased across Minnesota.

- Overall, in both the 7-county Twin Cities metro area (up 9%) and greater Minnesota (up 13%), there were more people experiencing homelessness in 2018 compared to 2015.
- This was especially evident in the population not in a formal shelter, which was up 93% in the Twin Cities metro and up 36% in greater Minnesota.
- The distribution of the homeless population between the Twin Cities metro (66%) and greater Minnesota (34%) is similar to the distribution found in the 2015 study.

**2018 COUNTS BY TWIN CITIES METRO AND GREATER MINNESOTA, SHELTERED VS. NOT IN A FORMAL SHELTER (OUTSIDE OR DOUBLED UP)**

	Twin Cities metro in shelters	Twin Cities metro <u>not</u> in formal shelter	Total Twin Cities metro	Greater MN in shelters	Greater MN <u>not</u> in formal shelter	Total greater MN
Children (17 and younger) with parents	2,002	158	2,160	850	255	1,105
Youth on their own (24 and younger)	578	297	875	400	209	609
Adults (25-54)	2,081	849	2,930	813	639	1,452
Older adults (55 and older)	630	168	798	137	119	256
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,291</b>	<b>1,472</b>	<b>6,763</b>	<b>2,200</b>	<b>1,222</b>	<b>3,422</b>

Note. This table does not include 48 homeless people in detox for whom age is not known.

## Explanation of 2018 data

The findings reported above are based on the 2018 Minnesota Homeless Study counts data. For more detailed data tables, please visit [www.mnhomeless.org](http://www.mnhomeless.org). There are 17 counts reports, including statewide and regional reports, which break down the counts data by shelter types, age, gender, and family status.

Readers should note that this fact sheet **does not include** estimates of the uncounted or unidentified homeless population. This fact sheet also does not include in-depth characteristics of Minnesota's homeless population or the count of those experiencing homelessness on American Indian reservations. Total single night estimates of Minnesota's homeless population will be reported in fall 2019.

## What's next?

Future reports will include findings from thousands of face-to-face interviews conducted throughout Minnesota, as well as a separate report about interviews conducted in partnership with six of Minnesota's Native American tribes.

Throughout the next year, Wilder Research staff will also publish specialized reports on homeless youth, veterans, older adults, families, and long-term homeless populations.

## Additional resources on homelessness in Minnesota

Wilder's triennial statewide study of homelessness is considered the most comprehensive source of descriptive information about homeless adults, youth, and children in Minnesota. It is not intended to be a complete count because no study strategy can locate all people experiencing homelessness. Other sources of information that complement our understanding of homelessness include:

- An annual January point in time (PIT) count of persons living in shelters, outdoors, and in places not meant for habitation. This count is required by the federal department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).
- The *Homeless Management Information System* (HMIS), which includes client information compiled by all providers of federal- and state-funded emergency shelter and supportive housing programming.

Together, these sources are used nationwide to inform federal, state, and local policies to prevent and end homelessness.

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The study is an independent initiative of Wilder Research in partnership with public and private funders and in-kind support from service providers throughout the state. Study co-directors: Michelle Decker Gerrard, Greg Owen

For more information about this report, call Wilder Research, 651-280-2700, or visit [mnhomeless.org](http://mnhomeless.org).

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