

**2026**

# **Point-in-Time Count**

Columbus & Franklin County, Ohio





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# About CSB

Community Shelter Board (CSB) leads a coordinated, community effort to ensure everyone has a safe, stable home in Franklin County and the Central Ohio region.

As the system leader for the prevention and response to homelessness in Central Ohio, CSB drives strategy, accountability, collaboration, and resource allocation to achieve the best possible outcomes for people experiencing homelessness. CSB collaborates with service provider organizations across Franklin County, creating a responsive network to ensure an effective and ready use of community resources.

CSB holds the distinction of being the first Unified Funding Agency designated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)—one of only 15 such systems nationwide. This designation underscores CSB’s leadership, credibility, and effectiveness in addressing homelessness and enhances its ability to secure critical federal resources.

CSB consistently ranks among the top performers nationally, earning #1 and #2 ratings from HUD for its ability to maximize funding and deliver impactful solutions.



# About the Point-in-Time Count

The annual Point-in-Time Count is a federally mandated census of people experiencing homelessness, conducted on a single day in January in Columbus and Franklin County, in accordance with HUD guidance. This year's point in time count was conducted on January 22, 2026.

Community Shelter Board (CSB) coordinated the effort in collaboration with the Continuum of Care, a 41-member planning body committed to ending homelessness across the region.



## 300+ Volunteers

**registered and mobilized to support this community-wide initiative.** This was the highest number of volunteers historically recorded for the count, surpassing the more than 250 volunteers recorded last year.

## PIT Numbers: Three Different Data Sets



### HMIS Data

Includes community members experiencing homelessness who are:

- Residing in emergency shelters, Winter Warming Centers, and transitional housing programs
- Currently connected with System street outreach services



### Community Organizations

Those that provide 24-hour, non-HMIS-participating facilities.



### Surveys

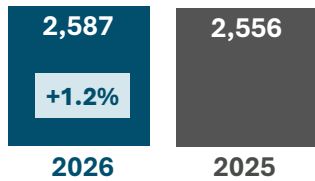
Conducted with community members who are actively living in places not meant for human habitation, who are not currently represented in any HMIS data.

Point-in-Time Counts are conducted nationwide in partnership with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The counts serve as a critical tool for understanding the scope and nature of homelessness in local communities and informing system-level planning and resource allocation.

# Results Overview



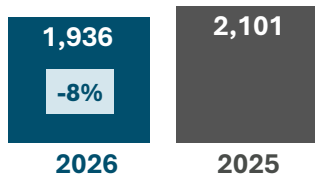
## Homelessness increased by 1.2%



This continued the upward trend from the 7.4% increase recorded last year.



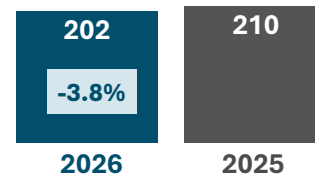
## Sheltered Homelessness decreased by 8%



165 fewer community members



## Family Homelessness decreased by 3.8%

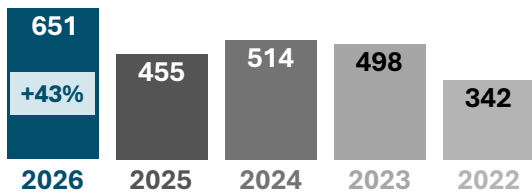


Second consecutive year of decline

# Results Overview



## Unsheltered Homelessness increased by 43%



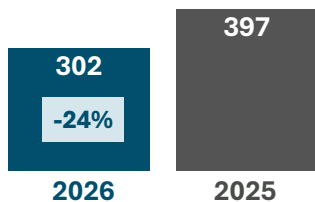
The 2024 count saw a 3% increase, while the 2025 count showed an 11% decrease.

### The increase in unsheltered homelessness is consistent with the modeling provided by Focus Strategies in the 2024 Community Assessment.

Their modeling predicts a 68% increase in unsheltered homelessness by 2028 unless there are additional investments in single adult diversion, rapid rehousing, and permanent supportive housing.



## People staying in hotels decreased by 24%

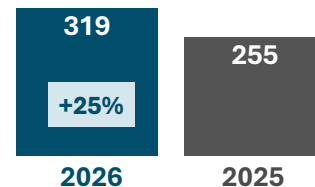


### 95 fewer hotel rooms in the System

The 2025 PIT Count occurred during hotel ramp up during a Polar Vortex.



## Largest Number of Registered Volunteers



### Increase in the number of Land Count Teams led to wider county coverage

Daytime magnet sites doubled in 2026.

# Key Trends



## Continued Decrease in Family Homelessness

**3.8% decrease in 2026 after a 9% decrease in 2025**

This reflects the significant System strategies and ongoing work by Family System partner agencies:

- Targeted Homeless Prevention and Diversion programs
- Rapid Rehousing System effectiveness and low recidivism rate
- Increased successful housing outcomes by shelter providers
- Direct Cash Transfer program effectiveness



## 43% Increase in Unsheltered Homelessness

**Additional resources must be targeted to address this rise in unsheltered homelessness.**

The increase is due to a few factors:

- The 2025 count happened during a winter storm, which led to increased sheltering.
- More volunteers in 2026 meant more ground covered and more neighbors found.



## Increased Unsheltered Counts Resulted in Increases for Many Demographic Groups

**Chronic Homelessness, Severe Mental Illness, Chronic Substance Use, Survivors of Domestic Violence, and Persons with HIV/AIDS**

All but one group decreased in sheltered count.

# Demographic Groups

Various demographic groups were affected by homelessness, each with distinct vulnerabilities and needs.

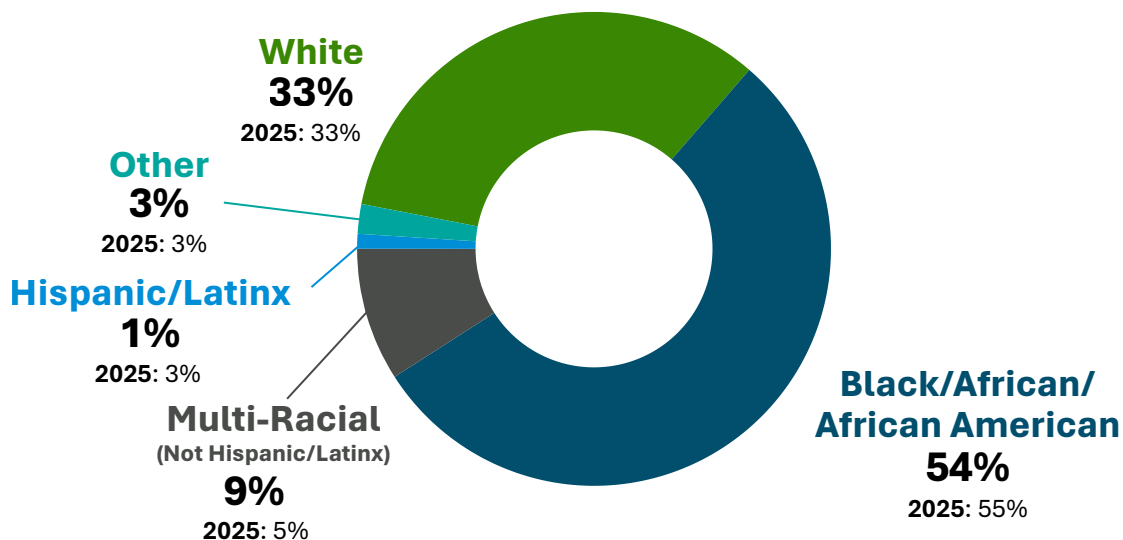
## Gender

All Gender demographics remained virtually unchanged.



## Race/Ethnicity

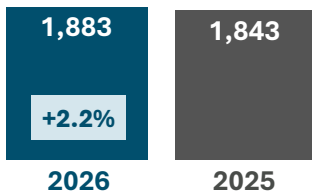
Race/Ethnicity remained similar, with a 4% increase in individuals reporting Multi-Racial and a 2% decrease in individuals reporting Hispanic or Latino ethnicity.



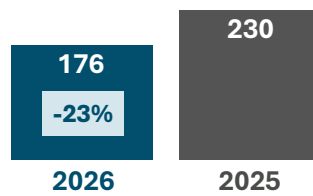
# Demographic Groups



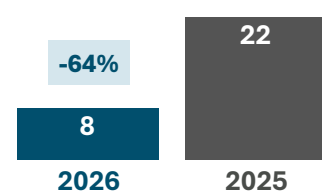
Single Adults  
increased by 2.2%



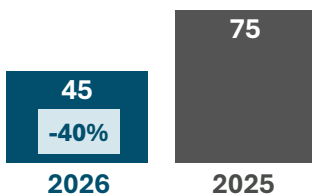
Unaccompanied Youth  
ages 18-24 decreased  
by 23%



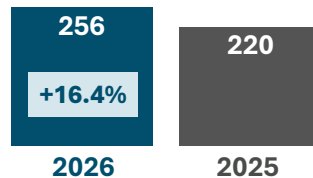
Unaccompanied Youth  
under age 18 decreased  
by 64%



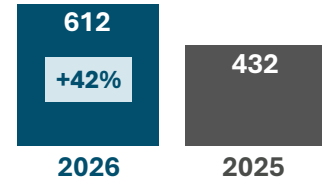
Parenting Youth  
decreased by 40%



Chronic Homelessness  
increased by 16.4%



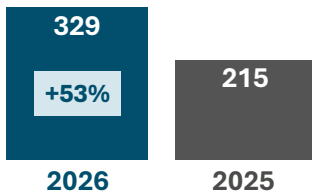
Severe Mental Illness  
increased by 42%



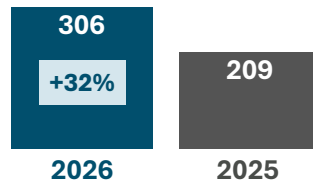
# Demographic Groups



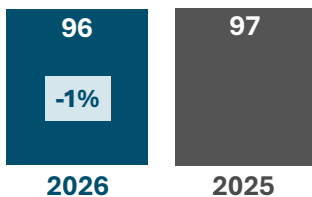
**Chronic Substance Use  
increased by 53%**



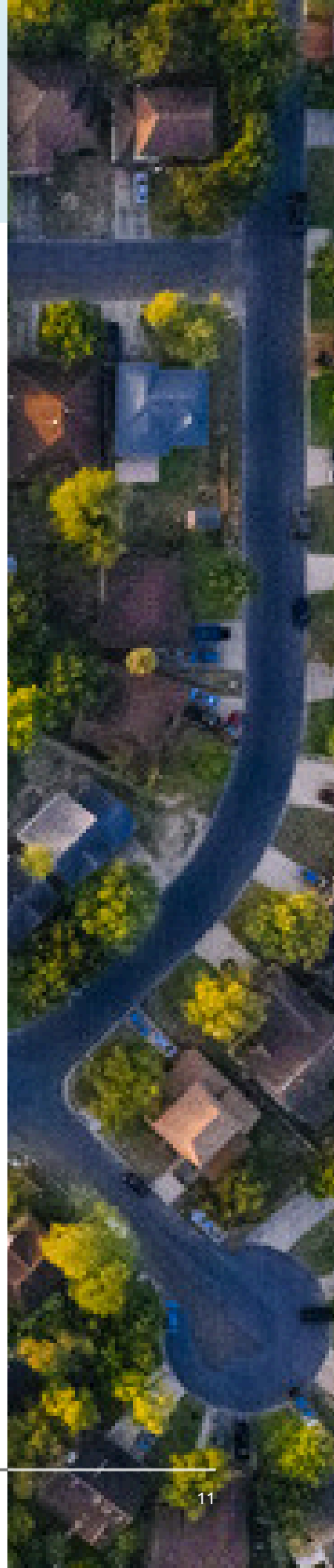
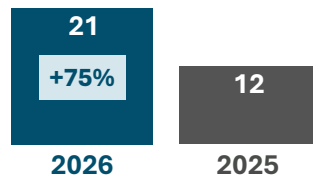
**Survivors of Domestic  
Violence increased by 32%**



**Veterans  
decreased by 1%**



**HIV/AIDS  
increased by 75%**



# Call to Action

1

## Address Unsheltered Homelessness

Communities reducing unsheltered homelessness are investing in additional diversion, street outreach and multiple permanent housing options.

System street outreach, hotel use, and permanent supportive housing must be scaled up to reflect the reality of this growing population.

System needs and plans include:



### Increase System-Funded Street Outreach

- Expand beyond four housing-focused outreach workers



### Scale up hotel options as a bridge toward permanent housing

- 44 people living outside and chronically homeless moved into permanent housing from 12/1/25 to 3/31/26 with Winter Warming Center funding.
- Hotel use year-round would permanently house 200-300 unsheltered community members annually.



### Continue to increase housing options and efficiency

- Further reduce housing process barriers and continue targeted housing plans.
- Increased collaboration with ADAMH on housing options.



### System investments coordination

- Unify and streamline communication, engagement, and rehousing work with the diverse city, county, non-profit, and Faith efforts in the community.



### Strategies to address unsheltered homelessness will reduce the increases in Demographic Groups

- This includes community members in the following groups: Chronic Homelessness, Severe Mental Illness, Chronic Substance Use, Survivors of Domestic Violence, and Persons with HIV/AIDS

# Call to Action

2



## Continue Current Strategies to Address Family Homelessness

### Expand prevention and diversion.

- Increase investment in prevention and diversion programs while working with the City of Columbus Resilient Housing Initiative.

### Investment in non-congregate shelter for families.

- Three hotel-based sites could reduce family homelessness by 48% by 2028, a transformative opportunity for our community.

3



## Continue to Address Single Adult and Youth Homelessness

### Follow Focus Strategies Recommendations

- Additional investments in diversion, rapid rehousing and permanent supportive housing.

### Resilient Housing Initiative

- Partnership with the City of Columbus with the Resilient Housing Initiative.

4



## Advocate for Policy Change

### Local, state, and federal

- Work with officials at all levels that prioritize deeply affordable housing, zoning and tenant protections.

### Engage with eviction court

- Use engagement as a way to prevent evictions.



# Thank You

CSB extends sincere gratitude to the hundreds of volunteers, community partners, service providers, and system leaders who made the 2026 Point-in-Time Count possible.

Your commitment, compassion, and collaboration are critical to understanding and addressing homelessness in Columbus and Franklin County. Together, through shared effort and focused action, we move closer to a community where homelessness is rare, brief, and nonrecurring.

**Thank you for your dedication to building a stronger future for all.**

For more information, visit [csb.org/pit](https://www.csb.org/pit).



  
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