Homeless Service System Data for Dane County

FISCAL YEAR 2019 (10/1/18-9/30/19) AND 2020 (10/1/19-9/30/20)

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CONTINUUM OF CARE COORDINATOR

HOMELESS SERVICES CONSORTIUM OF DANE COUNTY

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Executive Summary

Homelessness is a complex social and humanitarian issue. While the realities of potentially becoming homeless are unique to each individual, systematic, economic, health and societal influences contribute to the rate of homelessness in Dane County. In this reporting period, the COVID-19 pandemic added an unprecedented public health challenge that significantly impacted homelessness. The pandemic posed unique risks for people experiencing homelessness, with limited access to preventative measures, such as handwashing, home isolation, avoiding high touch surfaces, and rapid access to health care[1]. The pandemic also limited individuals in securing other safe temporary options outside of emergency shelters, such as with family and friends. Together with the lack of deeply affordable and attainable housing, stagnant wages, temporarily decreased employment options, job loss and reduction in household incomes, more residents have been at risk of becoming homeless.

The Dane County Continuum of Care (COC) social service networks have endured significant modifications, increased costs and limitations to services offered during this reporting period. They continue to work together to make homelessness rare, brief and non-recurring experience by having a systematic response in place.

The CoC's Vision Statement, as adopted in the 2016 Community Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness in Dane County, states: All households in Dane County should have the opportunity to secure and maintain safe, stable and affordable housing. Our community will achieve that through the following four goals:

   I.   Prevent Homelessness
  II.   Support People Experiencing Homelessness
 III.   End Homelessness
 IV.   Collaborate with Local, State and National Partners

The Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 & 2020 annual report on homeless services presents data that is entered into the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). HMIS collects real-time data from agencies that operate nearly all of the homeless programs in Dane County. The CoC's annual report, and data contained within it, are submitted to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The report has been revised to coincide with changes in HUD's reporting requirements and to align with its October 1 –September 30 fiscal year.

It is important to note that this report does not contain information about all homeless persons in the community. For example, it does not capture data about persons who are served solely by the small number of agencies or programs that don't utilize HMIS – such as Domestic Abuse Intervention Services (DAIS), St. Vincent de Paul (Port St. Vincent de Paul & St. Elizabeth Ann Seton House) and those receiving HUD Section 8 vouchers through Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) – or by faith communities or grassroots organizations. Nor does the report include information about those who lack

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[1] https://nlihc.org/coronavirus-and-housing-homelessness

stable housing but might be living with friends or family, self-paying in hotels or staying in a place not meant for human habitation and not interacting with service providers utilizing HMIS.

Prevent Homelessness

Homeless Prevention

Homeless prevention assistance includes rental assistance and housing relocation and stabilization services necessary to prevent an individual or family from seeking emergency shelter, or being forced to live on the streets, or a place not meant for human habitation. This assistance can take the form of direct financial aid or other services. Local providers include:
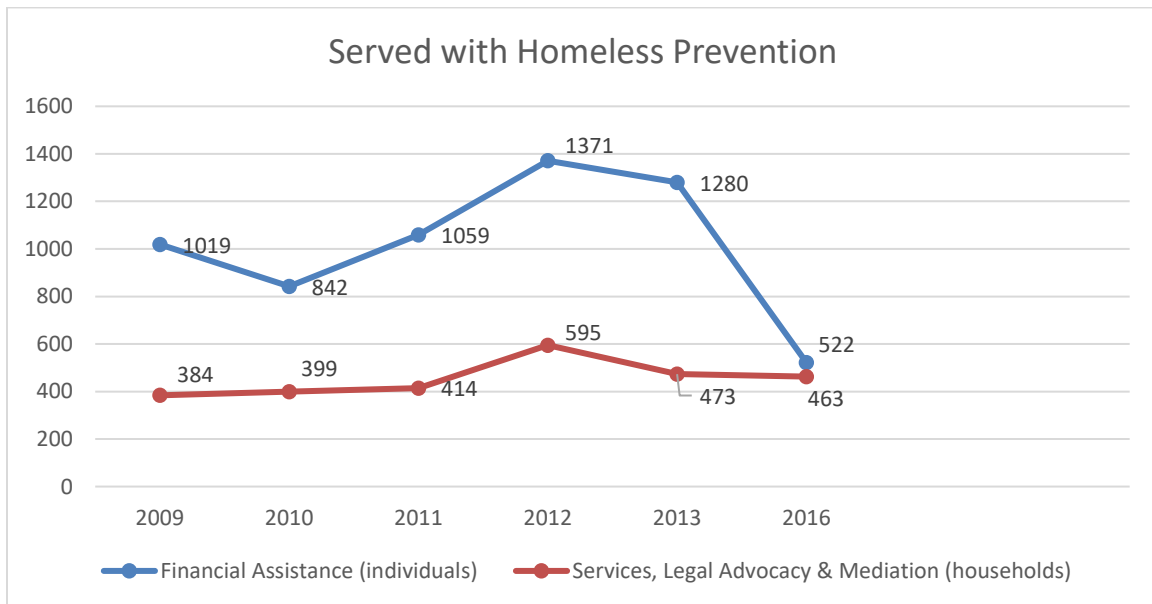
Providers of financial assistance:

- Briarpatch Youth Services
- Tenant Resource Center
- Porchlight: DIGS Program
- Community Action Coalition
- United Way of Dane County
- YWCA Madison

Providers of services, legal advocacy and mediation:

- Briarpatch Youth Services
- Legal Action of Wisconsin
- Tenant Resource Center

The following graph presents historical data (by calendar year) describing the number receiving Homeless Prevention Programming.

Served with Homeless Prevention

Year	Financial Assistance (individuals)	Services, Legal Advocacy & Mediation (households)
2009	1019	384
2010	842	399
2011	1059	414
2012	1371	595
2013	1280	473
2016	522	463

The table below provides data on the households served by Homeless Prevention programs in FY 2019 & 2020.

Households Served with Homeless Prevention
Data reported in households only
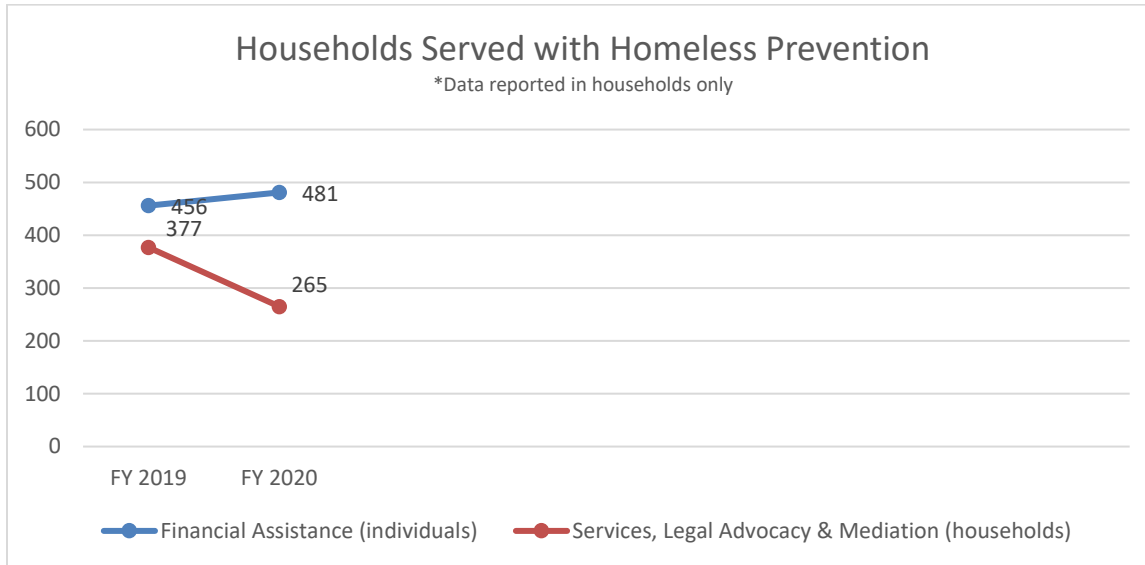
Diversion

Diversion[2] is a strategy that prevents homelessness for people seeking shelter by helping them identify immediate alternate housing arrangements and, if necessary, connecting them with services and financial assistance to help them return to permanent housing. Diversion specialists connect with people as they are requesting shelter or within 7-10 days of shelter entry. Diversion is not about keeping people out of the shelter system. It is about supporting self-resolution and should always be safe and appropriate according to the participant. Diversion services may include: short term case management; limited financial assistance; conflict mediation/ connection to mainstream services/benefits; and housing search.

In 2017, the CoC embraced Diversion as a strategy to prevent homelessness. At this time, families and single women are the only populations who receive diversion services as documented in HMIS. The Salvation Army is the sole provider of these services. Future reports will have diversion data.

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[2] Diversion section taken from: National Alliance to End Homelessness, "Closing the Front Door: Creating a Successful Diversion Program for Homeless Families"
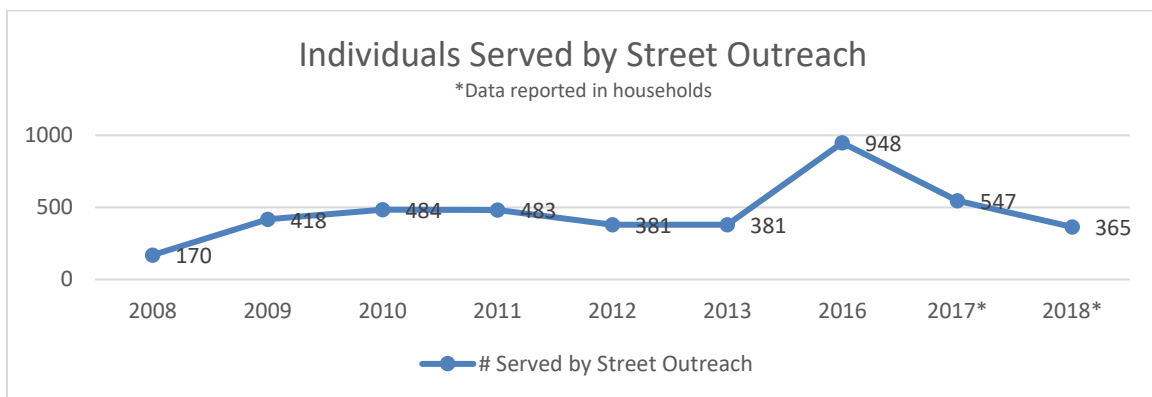
Support People Experiencing Homelessness

Street Outreach

Street outreach workers engage with people experiencing unsheltered homelessness in order to connect them with emergency shelter, housing, or other critical services. Street outreach services are provided in non-facility-based settings for people experiencing unsheltered homelessness who are unwilling or unable to access emergency shelter, housing or an appropriate health facility. Local providers of these services include:

- Briarpatch
- Catalyst for Change
- Kabba Recovery Services
- MachOneHealth
- First United Methodist Church
- Porchlight
- Tellurian
- Sankofa Behavioral and Community Health
- Tellurian
- Urban Triage
- Veterans Medical Center Homeless Program*
- Friends of the State Street Family*
- Meriter HEALTH Outreach Program*
- Connecting the Dots*

*Data is not entered into HMIS so not included in the figures below.

The following graph shows historical data (by calendar year) regarding the number of people served by Street Outreach.

Individuals Served by Street Outreach
*Data reported in households

The graph below shows households served by Street Outreach in Fiscal Years 2019 and 2020.

Households Served by Street Outreach

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1000

          801
 500  455

   0
    FY 2019   FY 2020

          ●── Households Served
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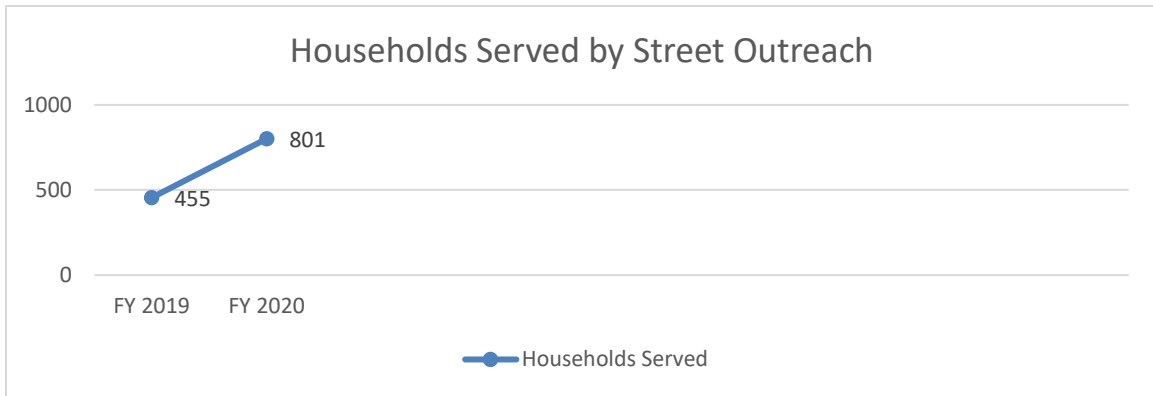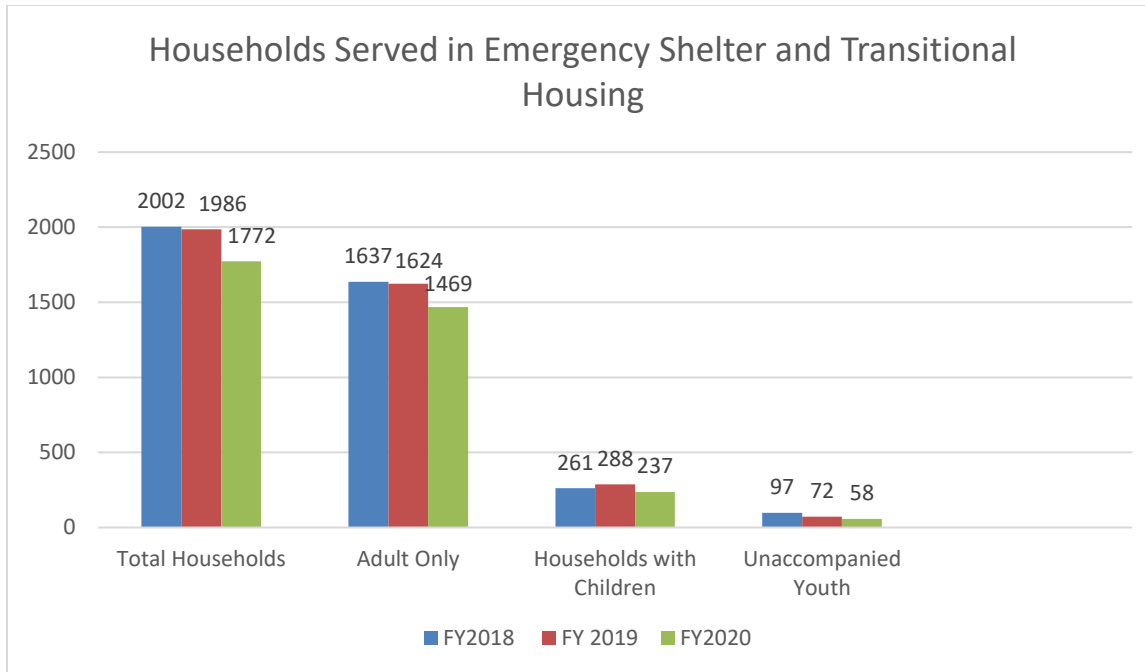
Emergency Shelter and Transitional Housing

The purpose of emergency shelter is to provide temporary shelter for people experiencing homelessness. Current Emergency Shelter providers included in the data are:

- Briarpatch: Youth Shelter
- Porchlight Inc.: Men's Shelter
- The Salvation Army: Women's Shelter and Family Shelter
- YWCA Madison: Family Shelter
- Sankofa Educational Leadership United: Family and Single's Shelter
- Vulnerable Population Hotels

Transitional Housing (TH) facilitates the movement of homeless individuals and families to permanent housing within 24 months of entering TH. Programs provide safe, affordable housing that meets participants' needs. Current, Transitional Housing providers included in the data are:

- Briarpatch: Transitional Living Program
- Porchlight Inc: VA Grant Per Diem: Spring Street
- The Road Home: Second Chance Apartment Project
- The Salvation Army: Holly House

Starting with the FY2018 report, HUD has combined the demographics for people served in emergency shelter and transitional housing. For HUD purposes, households in Transitional Housing projects are considered to be experiencing homelessness.
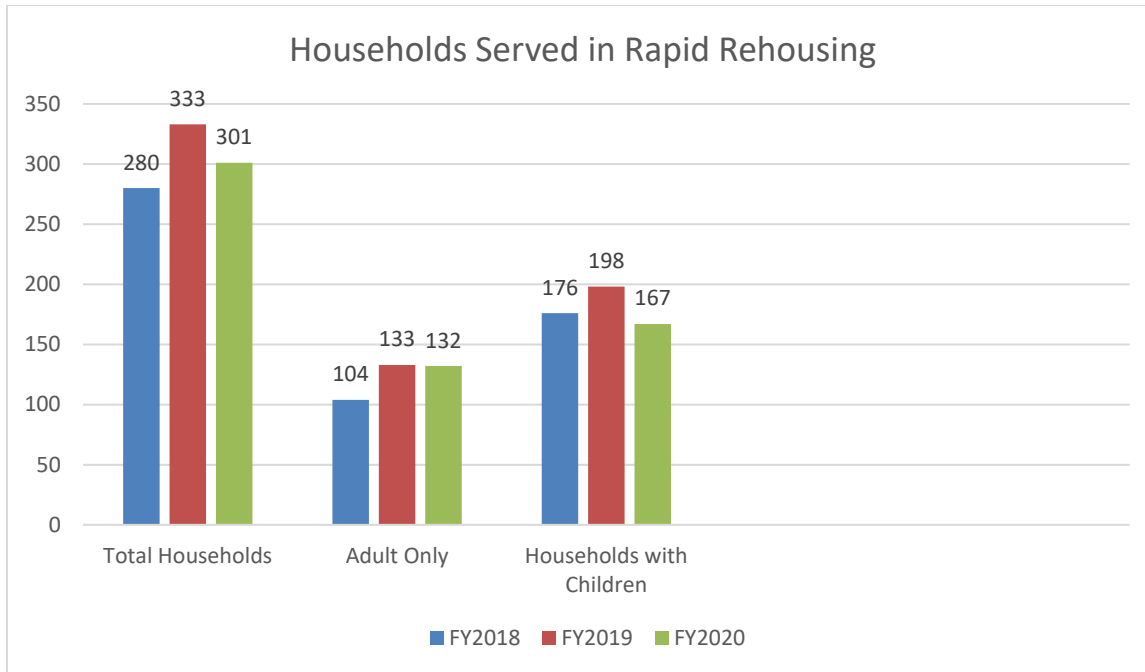
Households Served in Emergency Shelter and Transitional Housing

A bar chart titled "Households Served in Emergency Shelter and Transitional Housing" with a y-axis ranging from 0 to 2500.

Category	FY2018	FY 2019	FY2020
Total Households	2002	1986	1772
Adult Only	1637	1624	1469
Households with Children	261	288	237
Unaccompanied Youth	97	72	58

End Homelessness

Rapid Rehousing

Rapid Rehousing is an intervention designed to help individuals and families exit homelessness as quickly as possible, return to permanent housing, and achieve stability in that housing. Rapid rehousing assistance is offered without preconditions (such as employment, income, absence of criminal record or sobriety) and the resources and services provided are tailored to the unique needs of the household. The core components of a rapid rehousing program are housing identification and relocation, short- and/or medium-term rental assistance and move-in (financial) assistance, and case management and housing stabilization services. Typically, this intervention is offered to households for up to 24 months.

Rapid rehousing providers included in the data are:

- Community Action Coalition: Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF)
- Lutheran Social Services: Rapid Rehousing
- Tenant Resource Center: Rapid Rehousing
- The Road Home: Rapid Rehousing for Families
- The Salvation Army: DAWNS and RISE
- Sankofa Educational Leadership United: Rapid Rehousing
- United Way of Dane County: Rapid Rehousing

Households Served in Rapid Rehousing

	Total Households	Adult Only	Households with Children
FY2018	280	104	176
FY2019	333	133	198
FY2020	301	132	167

Permanent Supportive Housing

Permanent supportive housing is safe, affordable housing, the purpose of which is to provide housing without a designated length of stay. It is defined by the following characteristics:
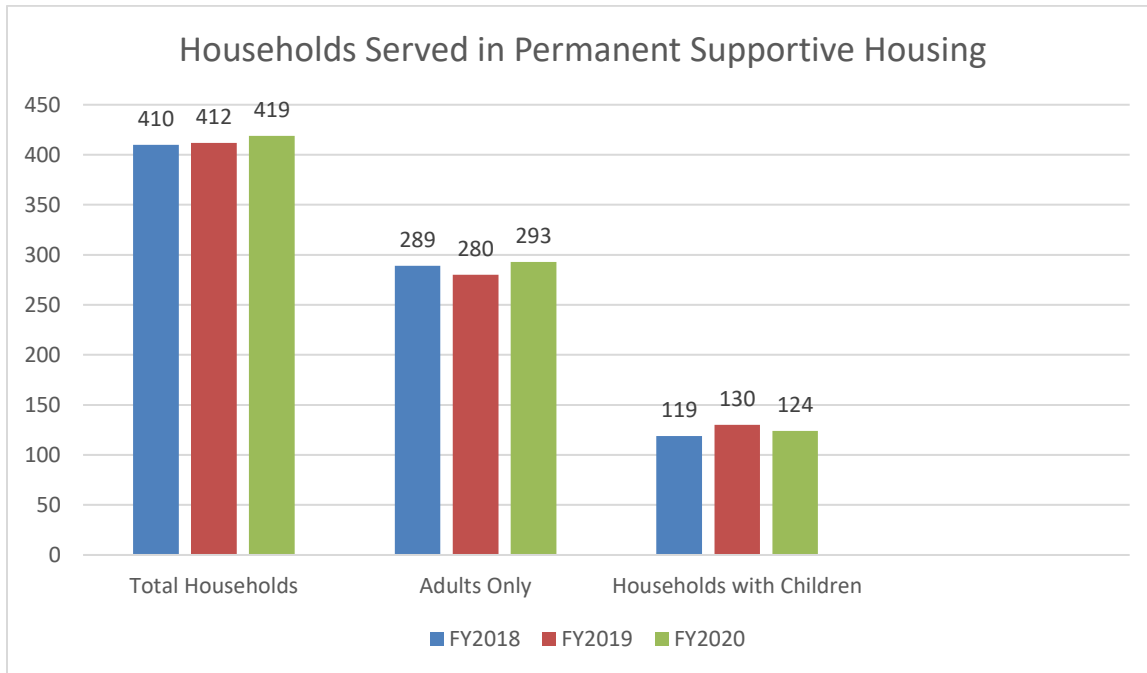
- Affordable – Housing is subsidized to ensure fiscal sustainability of household
- Safe – Housing meets standards of habitability
- Low-barrier – No required preconditions to access housing
- Supportive – Household has indefinite access to client-driven supportive services that follow household through housing transitions
- Community-focused – Housing is integrated, to its greatest extent, into the surrounding community and services support household in connecting to and interacting with community

Permanent Supportive Housing providers included in the data are:

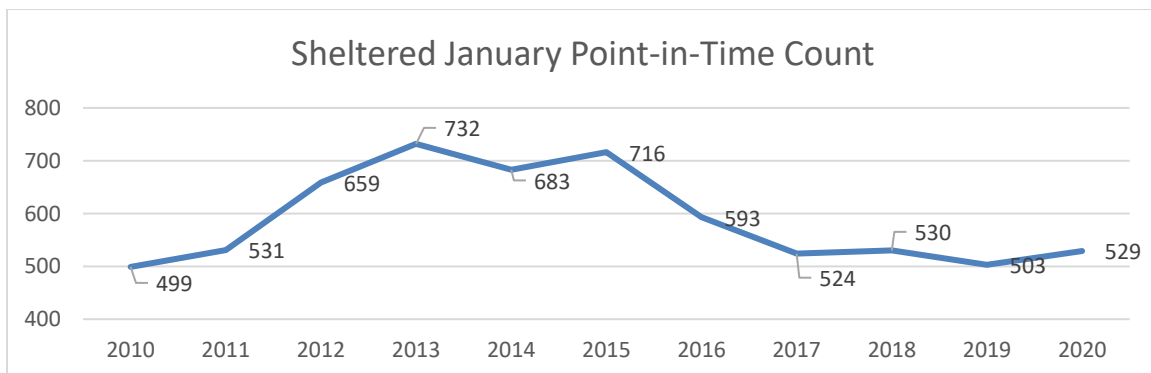| Community Action Coalition	Home for Good
	SHIFT
Heartland Housing	Rethke
	Tree Lane Family Housing
Housing Initiatives Inc.	Permanent Housing for Chronically Homeless
	Rental Assistance
Porchlight	HOSTS
	Housing First Leasing, Scattered Site
Tellurian	HOPE
	ReachOut Housing First
	ReachOut Housing First Expansion
	PHP: Scattered Site
	Willy Street SRO

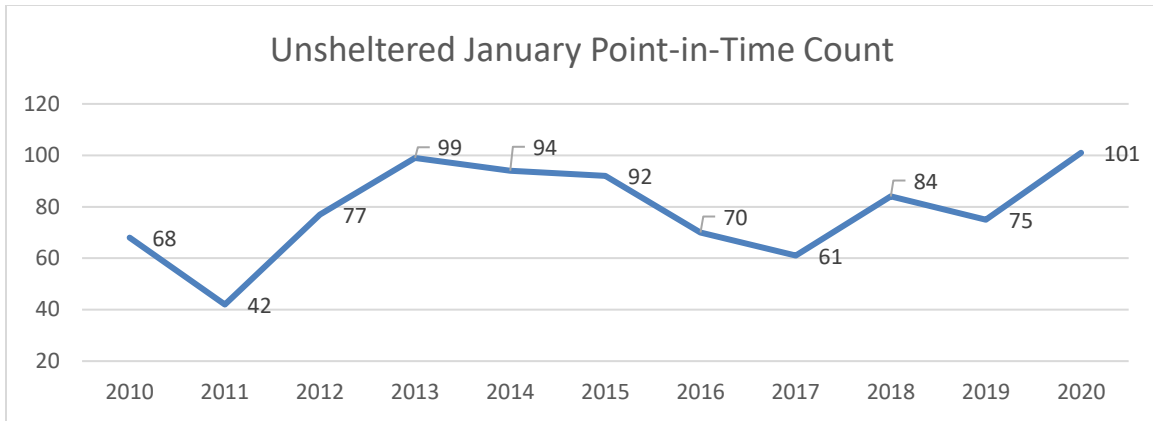| The Road Home	Housing and Hope
YWCA Madison	House-ability

The 2020 Housing Inventory Count (HIC) shows that there were 965 beds of Permanent Supportive Housing available in our community. This number includes beds that are not represented in the data below (HUD-VASH vouchers and Vivent Health).

Households Served in Permanent Supportive Housing

	Total Households	Adults Only	Households with Children
FY2018	410	289	119
FY2019	412	280	130
FY2020	419	293	124

Point-in-Time

The Point-in-Time (PIT) count is a process by which communities attempt to count the number of sheltered and unsheltered homeless persons on a single night each year. HUD requires that Continuums of Care (CoCs) conduct an annual count of homeless persons who are sheltered in emergency shelter, transitional housing and Safe Havens on a single night. In addition, CoCs must conduct a count of unsheltered persons on that same night. The following graph presents historical data showing PIT counts for both sheltered and unsheltered persons.

Sheltered January Point-in-Time Count

Year	Count
2010	499
2011	531
2012	659
2013	732
2014	683
2015	716
2016	593
2017	524
2018	530
2019	503
2020	529

Unsheltered January Point-in-Time Count

Year	Count
2010	68
2011	42
2012	77
2013	99
2014	94
2015	92
2016	70
2017	61
2018	84
2019	75
2020	101

System Performance Measures

Funders have always required homeless service agencies to provide data on their projects. This data has significantly changes over the years. In the past, it felt important to know the number of people a project served. The thought was that the more people that came through the door the better. Gradually, it became important to report on what happened with those people. Projects started looking at the number of people who exited to permanent housing or achieved a certain goal. At that time, the community knew how individual projects were performing in very limited ways.

In FY2015, the Department of Housing and Urban Development asked Continuum of Cares to submit System Performance Measures. These measures help communities see how their overall homeless services system is making progress toward preventing and ending homelessness. Communities can also see how individual programs are performing within the system. There are seven measures that communities consider:

1. Length of time persons remain homeless;
2. The extent to which persons who exit homelessness to permanent housing destinations return to homelessness;
3. Number of people experiencing homelessness;
4. Jobs and income growth for people in CoC-funded projects;
5. Number of persons who become homeless for the first time;
6. Homelessness prevention and housing placement of persons defined by Category 3 of HUD's homeless definition in CoC-funded projects[3];
7. Successful housing placement.

Communities are expected to examine their data each year for progress in preventing and ending homelessness. All of these measures are important for this work, but the community focuses on three of them: length of time homeless, returns to homelessness, and exits to permanent housing.

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[3] Only High Performing Communities, as designated by HUD, report on this measure. There are currently no High Performing Communities in the United States.

Length of Time Homeless

Below is data from FY2020 that shows 86 days as the average length of time spent homeless. This is for households served in emergency shelter, safe haven and transitional housing projects, and in rapid rehousing and permanent supportive housing projects before move-in. The second chart shows the time distribution of days homeless. The majority of households experience homelessness for 30 days or less. The third chart provides historical data, but only includes those served in emergency shelter and safe haven.
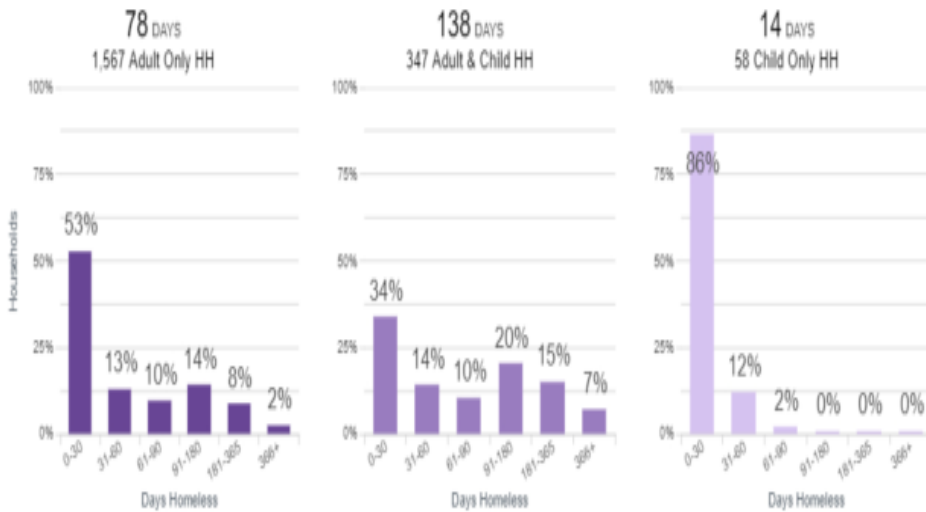
Average Days Homeless

The average cumulative, unduplicated number of days that households were served in ES, SH, or TH projects; and days in RRH or PSH prior to move-in.

86
DAYS Homeless
1,982 HH

Adult Only — 78 DAYS | 1,567 HH
Adult & Child — 138 DAYS | 347 HH
Child Only — 14 DAYS | 58 HH
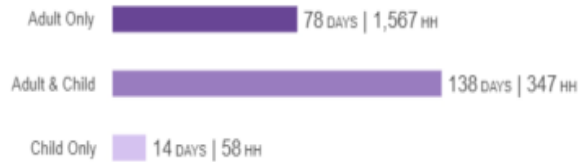
Time Distribution of Days Homeless

Average cumulative days homeless and distribution by defined time intervals for each household type.

78 DAYS
1,567 Adult Only HH

0-30: 53%
31-60: 13%
61-90: 10%
91-180: 14%
181-365: 8%
366+: 2%

138 DAYS
347 Adult & Child HH

0-30: 34%
31-60: 14%
61-90: 10%
91-180: 20%
181-365: 15%
366+: 7%

14 DAYS
58 Child Only HH

0-30: 86%
31-60: 12%
61-90: 2%
91-180: 0%
181-365: 0%
366+: 0%

Average Length of Time Homeless for Persons in Emergency Shelter and Safe Haven

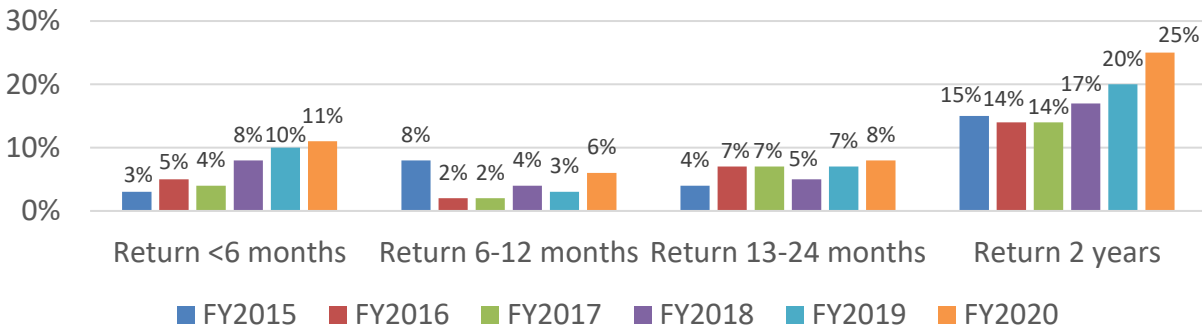| FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018	FY2019	FY2020
47	45	39	42	38	65
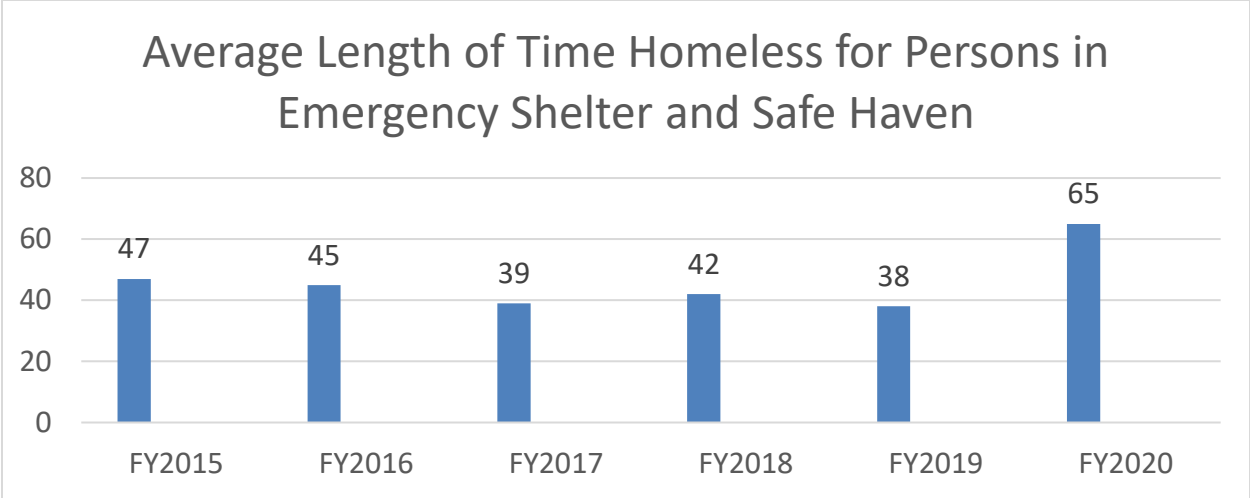
Returns to Homelessness

It is so important for households to exit to permanent housing destinations, but it is just as important for them to be able to maintain that housing. One of the goals in our community is, if homelessness is not prevented, that it be a one-time experience. The chart below shows the percent of households who returned to the homeless system within six months of exiting to permanent housing. Of those who exited to permanent housing, 10% returned to homelessness within six months. This is a decrease from FY2019 where 20% of people who exited to permanent housing returned to homelessness within six months.

Returns to the Homeless System

Percent of households that returned to the homeless system within six months of exiting to a permanent destination. Results are shown for the exit cohort selected in the dropdown.

HH that Exited in the first 6 mo of the Current Report Period

10% RETURNS 16 of 160 HH

Adult Only — 93 HH — 13% | 12 HH
Adult & Child — 51 HH — 4% | 2 HH
Child Only — 16 HH — 13% | 2 HH

Permanent Destinations ▪ Returns

Returns to Homelessness from Permanent Housing Exit

Returns to Homelessness from Permanent Housing Exit

Return <6 months: FY2015 3%, FY2016 5%, FY2017 4%, FY2018 8%, FY2019 10%, FY2020 11%

Return 6-12 months: FY2015 8%, FY2016 2%, FY2017 2%, FY2018 4%, FY2019 3%, FY2020 6%

Return 13-24 months: FY2015 4%, FY2016 7%, FY2017 7%, FY2018 5%, FY2019 7%, FY2020 8%

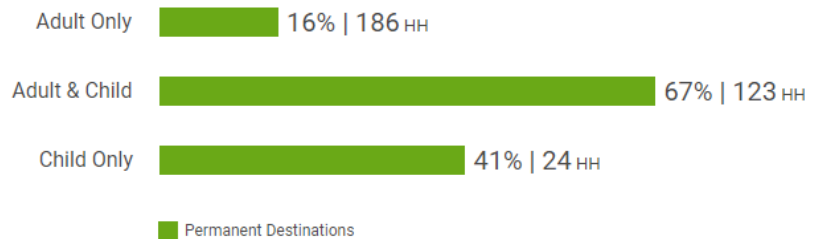Return 2 years: FY2015 15%, FY2016 14%, FY2017 14%, FY2018 17%, FY2019 20%, FY2020 25%
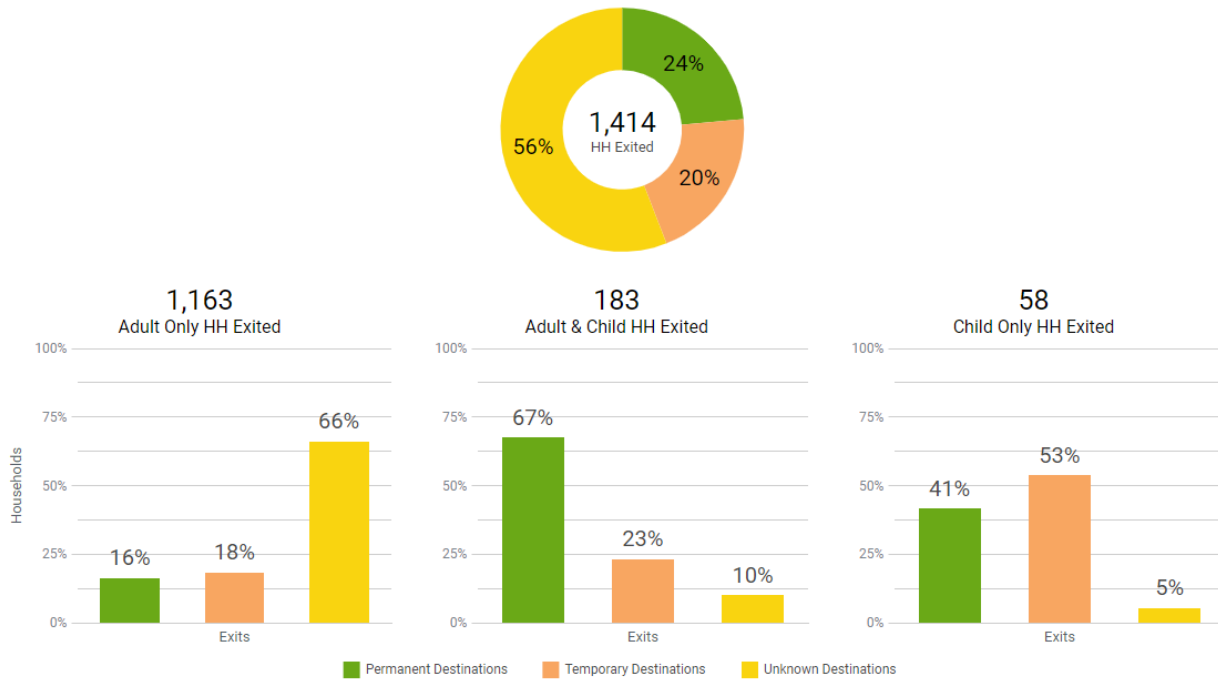
Exits to Permanent Housing

When households enter the homeless services system. Providers are working with them to find permanent housing as quickly as possible. In an ideal world, all households will exit to permanent housing. In FY2020, 24% of households exited the homeless services system into permanent housing. This is a low number that can be attributed to 56% of households exiting to "unknown destinations." This means that the household stopped accessing the service and the provider was not certain where they went. Agencies are working to hire more staff and put steps in place to achieve better data collection. This is an issue across the nation especially for shelters serving single adults on a night-to-night basis.
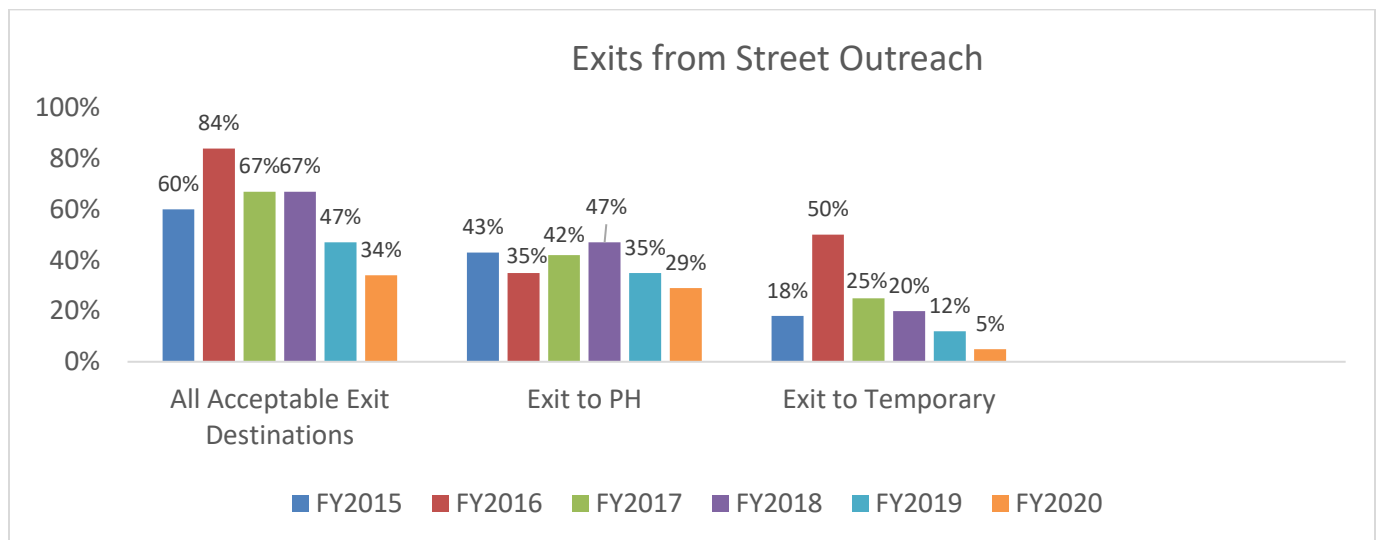
Exits from the Homeless System

24%
Exited to
Permanent Destinations
334 of 1,414 HH

Adult Only: 16% | 186 HH
Adult & Child: 67% | 123 HH
Child Only: 41% | 24 HH

■ Permanent Destinations

Exits by Destination Type

1,414
HH Exited

24%
20%
56%

1,163
Adult Only HH Exited

16%   18%   66%

183
Adult & Child HH Exited

67%   23%   10%

58
Child Only HH Exited

41%   53%   5%
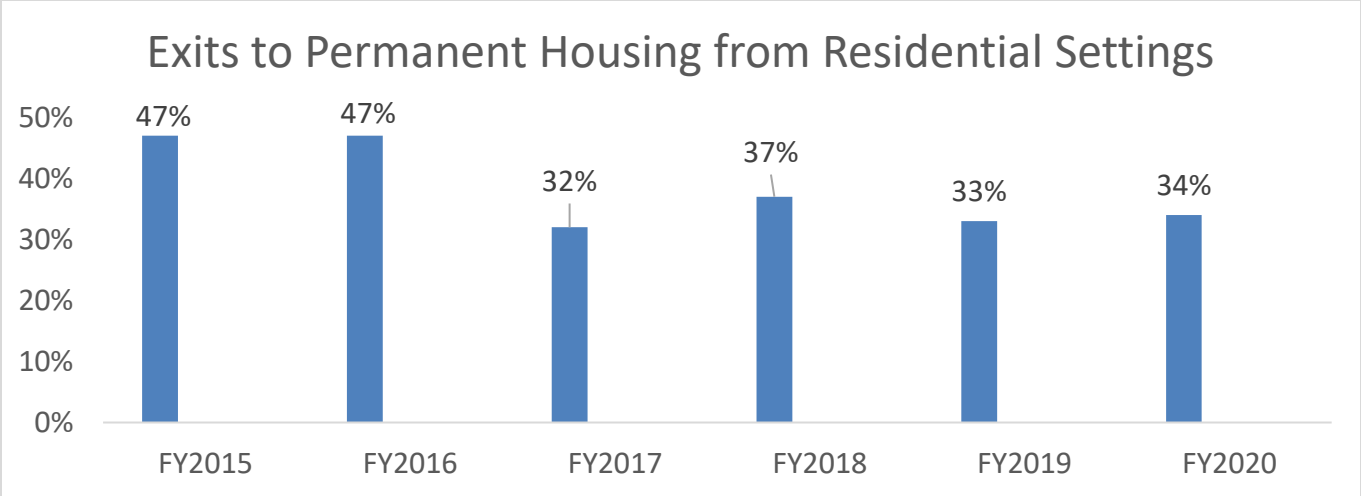
■ Permanent Destinations   ■ Temporary Destinations   ■ Unknown Destinations

Historical data looks at exits from street outreach and the exits of households served in emergency shelter, safe haven, transitional housing or rapid rehousing.

Exits from Street Outreach

All Acceptable Exit Destinations
60% 84% 67% 67% 47% 34%

Exit to PH
43% 35% 42% 47% 35% 29%

Exit to Temporary
18% 50% 25% 20% 12% 5%

■ FY2015   ■ FY2016   ■ FY2017   ■ FY2018   ■ FY2019   ■ FY2020

Exits to Permanent Housing from Residential Settings

FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018	FY2019	FY2020
47%	47%	32%	37%	33%	34%

Providers of the Homeless Services Consortium are working to decrease length of time homeless, decrease returns to homelessness and increase exits to permanent housing. Members of the Consortium research what is working well in other communities, attend national conferences to learn best practices and talk with one another to improve service delivery in Dane County.

Collaborate with Local, State and National Partners

Federal relief funds to prevent, prepare for and respond to the coronavirus pandemic provided valuable resources to the community to expand homeless services. The State of Wisconsin, City of Madison and Dane County received funding from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act, the COVID Relief Act and the American Rescue Plan Act and used those resources to address the impacts of COVID-19 pandemic on homelessness in the community. A report on funding outcomes will be published separately from this document at a later date.