Every year on the last Wednesday of January, the Lane County Human Services Division, in partnership with numerous agencies and groups, conducts the annual one-night Homeless Point in Time (PIT) Count. The PIT Count is a three part survey which includes a count of the unsheltered and sheltered population of people experiencing homelessness, as well as a Housing Inventory Count (HIC). The 2023 PIT Count was conducted for the night of January 25, 2023.

The Point-In-Time Count provides a useful tool for understanding homelessness and year-over-year trends in our community. One-night counts are required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and Oregon Housing and Community Services (State of Oregon) which provides funding for housing and services related to homelessness. The Point in Time Summary is used year-round by planning boards, nonprofits, community organizations, and policy makers on local, state, and federal levels to inform their work on this issue.

Information about the Count:

This year's unsheltered count was primarily conducted by generating a report from Lane County's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). A modified version of the Homelessness By-Name List was used, which includes homeless individuals in any HMIS-participating program. Programs include street outreach, day access centers, food pantries, and other services for people experiencing homelessness. This is the third year Lane County has been approved by HUD to use this method.

To supplement this count, trained outreach workers collected surveys in areas where it was most likely that people who are unsheltered were not engaged in other services. During this year's count, surveyors approached nearly 260 individuals and asked them to participate in the count. Approximately 35 declined to be surveyed, so were not included in the count. Another 61 individuals completed the survey but had already been counted through HMIS. Finally, 163 individuals completed the survey and were not in the HMIS count, so they were added to this year's unsheltered count.

Consistent with prior years and HUD recommendations, the sheltered count was conducted using HMIS data. A small number of providers who do not participate in HMIS, like domestic violence service providers, sent their own sheltered counts to be included in the county-wide Point-in-Time Count.

Highlights of the Count

Of the 2,824 people counted:
- 640 individuals were staying in Emergency Shelter
- 74 individuals were living in Transitional Housing designated for people who are homeless
- 2,110 individuals were without shelter
  - 491 of these individuals were staying in alternative shelter programs like Safe Sleep Sites, Rest Stops, and sanctioned car camping. While these provide much-needed safe places to sleep, they do not meet the HUD definition of shelter.

Characteristics:
- 411 homeless individuals were in households with children (117 households); 108 of those were sheltered (33 households) and 303 individuals were unsheltered (84 households)
- 197 homeless individuals were veterans; 51 were sheltered and 146 were unsheltered
- 14 homeless children were unaccompanied by adults; an additional 154 homeless youth age 18-24 were unaccompanied

- 1,170 individuals (41% of all individuals counted) were chronically homeless
- 1,114 people self-reported a mental health condition; 651 people self-reported substance use disorder
- This is the first year that HUD has asked communities to collect the age of adults. 552 homeless individuals were age 55-64 (165 sheltered and 387 unsheltered); 248 individuals were age 65 and older (89 sheltered and 156 unsheltered)

Trends:
- The total number of individuals experiencing homelessness has increased by 72% in the past 5 years, from 1,641 individuals in 2018 to 2,824 individuals in 2023
- 75% of homeless individuals were unsheltered, which is significantly higher than the last pre-COVID count (65% in January of 2020)
- The percentage of homeless individuals who had experienced domestic violence increased significantly this year, from 7.8% of people counted in 2022 to 19.7% of people counted in 2023
- The percentage of chronically homeless individuals who were sheltered increased significantly from 2020 to 2023, from 24% to 43%
- The percentage of homeless individuals who were veterans decreased, from 10% of all homeless individuals in 2022 to 7% in 2023.

The Homelessness By-Name List

Each month, Lane County uses HMIS data to publish an estimate of the number of people experiencing homelessness in the county at some point during the month. This is published on the Human Services Division's Tableau page. The criteria for this report is more expansive than what is used for the HUD PIT Count, because it looks at all services and data collected during the month rather than on one night. This year, 4,816 people were on the By-Name list during the month of January. This is significantly higher than the 2,880 individuals included in the count for the night of January 25, 2023.

Housing Inventory Count

Lane County also submitted the number of shelter and permanent housing beds used on the night of January 25, 2023. 640 of 823 Emergency Shelter beds were utilized (78%), 74 of 115 Transitional Housing beds (65%), and an additional 1,172 individuals were not homeless the night of the PIT Count because they were residing in permanent housing. The 224 available beds in Emergency Shelter and Transitional Housing is much smaller than the 2,110 individuals who were unsheltered the night of the count. Additionally, some of these unoccupied beds have eligibility requirements that unsheltered individuals may have been unable to meet.

Oregon State of Emergency Due to Homelessness (All In)

Due to the increase of unsheltered homelessness in the Point in Time Count from 2017 to 2022, Lane County was included in the governor's state of emergency due to homelessness. As a result, more than $15 million of state funding have been allocated to local agencies targeting homelessness. There is more information about All In on the county's All In page, and more information about the Human Services Division's work at lanecounty.org/HSD.