

HENNEPIN COUNTY MINNESOTA



Here. To help every resident find a safe
and affordable place to live with dignity.

Housing Stability

Hennepin County **Human Services**
Annual Report • October 2019



Housing Stability

Our office seeks to ensure that our community members who face the most barriers and earn the lowest incomes can access and sustain safe and stable housing. People with stable housing face fewer barriers in getting their kids to school, keeping a job and contributing to their communities. A home provides safety, dignity and the opportunity to grow.

Housing is a major challenge in Hennepin County and across the Twin Cities region, with significant needs across all income levels. Housing Stability invests in three strategies:



Supportive housing

Maintaining and increasing the quantity, quality and variety of supportive housing options in the community



Resource navigation

Making it easier for people – and those assisting them – to navigate housing resources and information



Systems change

Leading and coordinating community-wide efforts to end homelessness

Homelessness in Hennepin County

Family homelessness is down; more individuals are without homes

The Point in Time Count (PIT) is a one-day, annual snapshot of homelessness in our community: people staying in shelter, transitional housing-or places not fit for human habitation. Recent increases are mostly due to rising rent costs and reduced availability of low-income housing.

2014-2018 HUD PIT data for Hennepin County Continuum of Care

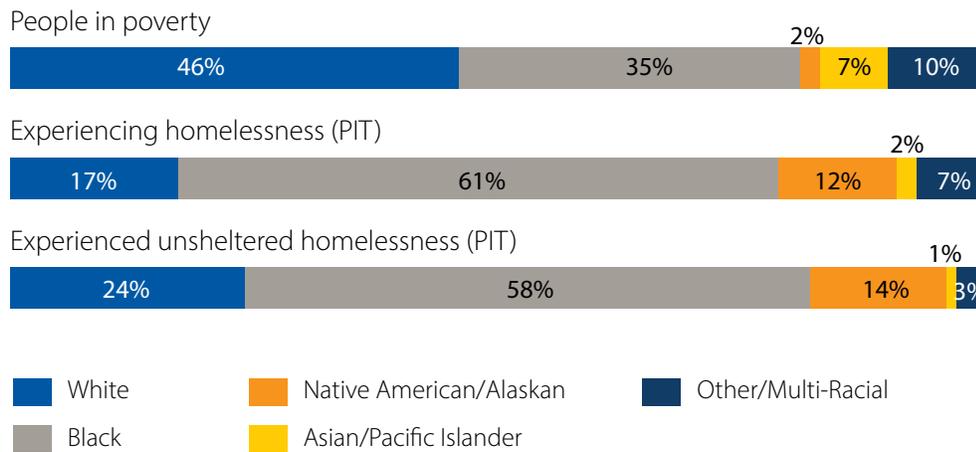
Year	Total	People in families	Individuals
2014	3,731	2,088	1,643
2015	3,215	1,704	1,511
2016	3,056	1,591	1,465
2017	3,057	1,662	1,395
2018	3,013	1,321	1,692

Housing challenges

30 percent of households in the county pay more than one-third of their income toward housing, putting them at risk of being unable to afford to meet other basic needs such as health care, food, transportation and education. Each year, Hennepin helps more than 7,500 households that are experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

African Americans are disproportionately more likely to live in poverty and experience homelessness in Hennepin County.

Racial breakdown of poverty and homelessness in Hennepin County



Housing challenges in 2017

- 187,587 households in Hennepin County were renters, a 21.5% increase since 2000
- Median rent costs went up 9%
- Median renter income decreased by 11%

Our clients

Housing Stability focuses on initiatives that lead to stable, secure housing for vulnerable, high-risk people. Our priority populations often have multiple barriers to securing stable housing including:

Trauma or isolation

- Families involved with child welfare
- People experiencing chronic homelessness
- Unaccompanied minors
- Youth in and leaving extended foster care
- Youth experiencing sexual exploitation

Disabilities or chronic illness

- Homeless people with complex medical conditions
- People living with developmental disabilities
- Youth with neuro-diverse conditions (brain injuries like fetal alcohol syndrome or traumatic brain injury)
- People experiencing chronic homelessness

Chemical or mental health issues

- People living with a serious and persistent mental illness who leave treatment
- People who are frequent users of detox

Our accomplishments

Hennepin County provides many services and supports to people with significant barriers to housing. Our work includes:

Helping residents avoid or homelessness or find housing

Every year, Hennepin helps more than 7,500 residents experiencing or at risk of homelessness to access and maintain housing. The tools we use include:

- Short-term rent assistance
- Support navigating services and the housing market
- Case management

Funding services and operating costs for supportive housing

We provide support for the services and operations of 15,000 units of supportive housing. State and federal agencies provide 90 percent of the funding, for a total of \$95.7 million.

Sheltering people who are experiencing homelessness

Hennepin County allocates \$11 million each year to nonprofit agencies that provide shelter for adults, families and youth. Approximately 9,000 people experiencing homelessness find shelter every year through 1,000 single shelter beds and as many as 200 family rooms that the county supports.

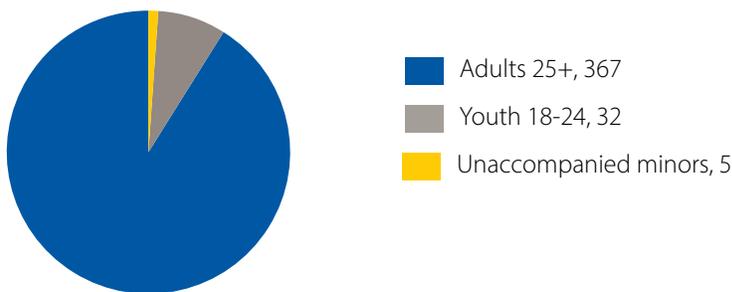
Engaging the community

With a goal of prioritizing the input of those closest to the issues, Housing Stability brings together stakeholders from across the county for sustained engagement through regular focus groups, community meetings, working committees and advisory boards.

Coordinating and prioritizing action

Hennepin's Coordinated Entry System prioritizes the most vulnerable people who experience homelessness – families, youth and single adults – for thousands of housing options.

Breakdown of unsheltered homelessness, April 2018

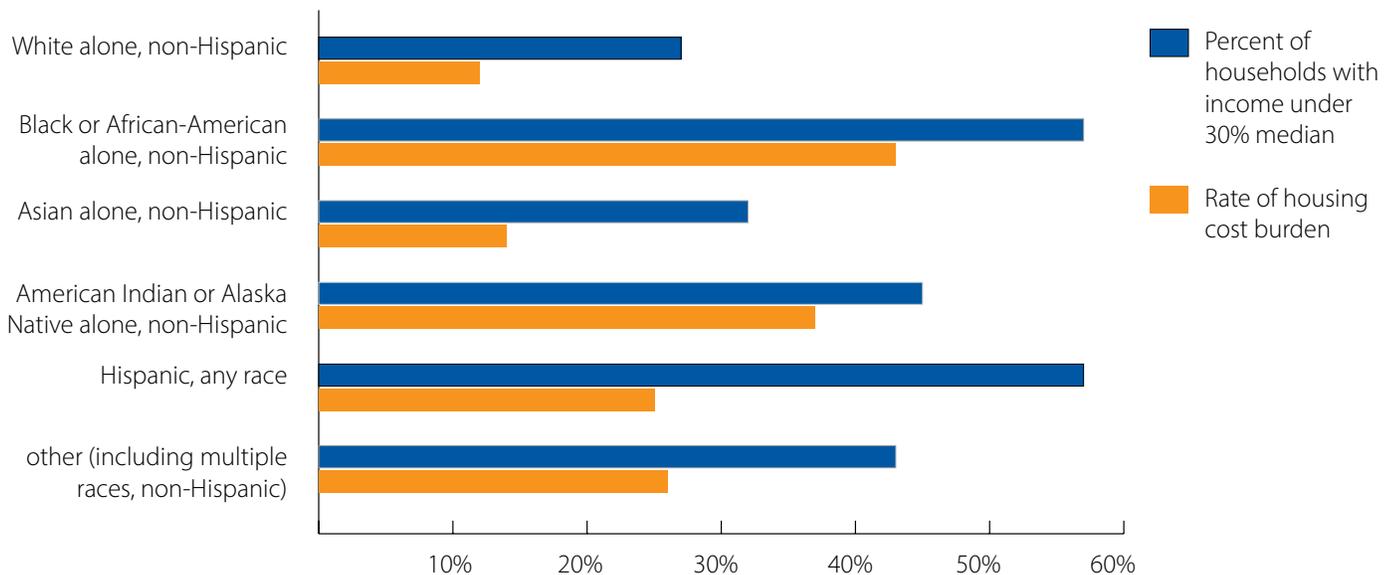


In focus

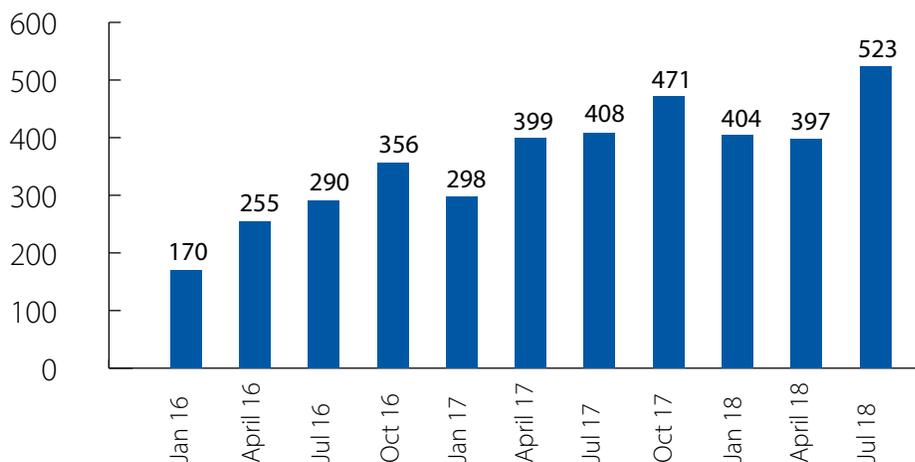
Housing supply doesn't meet the needs of the most impoverished

14,000 subsidized housing units are considered affordable to the nearly 74,000 people facing extreme poverty, at or below at 30% of area median income. 94% of all shelter users were people living in extreme poverty. People of color are most likely to face extreme poverty and a disproportionate housing cost burden.

Rate of housing cost burden and income <30% average median income by race/ethnicity



Growth in unsheltered homelessness



In focus

Encampment brings unsheltered homelessness into the spotlight

An increase in highly visible unsheltered homelessness among single adults has brought the issue of homelessness to the forefront for many residents.

The total number of people experiencing homelessness gone down because the number of families using shelter has decreased consistently, for a total reduction of more than 40 percent in the past five years (the total number of family households in shelter in 2013 was more than 1,500, while in 2018 it was 862).

However, despite fewer families experiencing homelessness in the past two years, a growth in highly visible unsheltered homelessness among single adults has brought the issue of homelessness to the forefront of many residents' attention.

Lessons from the encampment

In August 2018, Minneapolis made national headlines when a homeless encampment seemingly appeared overnight.

A coalition of city, county, and American Indian agencies worked together to coordinate a response. Many other organizations provided outreach, health and housing services, brought food, clothing and other necessities to support those in the camp. Collectively, our community moved 30 families into shelter and more than 100 people to housing. Another 175 people moved into the temporary Navigation Center established by the Red Lake Nation and Simpson Housing.

While the encampment and its appalling conditions drew considerable attention, the scale of homelessness and efforts to prevent and end it are much larger.

In Minnesota, especially in the Twin Cities metropolitan area, we're seeing desperately low incomes and a devastating shortage of affordable housing. This is putting a significant cost burden on families and trapping people in homelessness.

In the face of this huge challenge, Hennepin County leveraged funds to help 23,000 households to access and maintain stable housing in the past year. Much work remains, and we will continue working to make a difference.



On any given night

1,400 people stay in Hennepin County-funded homeless shelters.

While the number of families experiencing homelessness continues to decline, our single adult shelters are fully occupied each night. In addition, 500-600 people occupy small encampments, ride the transit system, and sleep on the streets.

Innovations and strategies to improve outcomes

Information management system helps connect people to help

People who are chronically homeless have experienced homelessness for at least a year – either consistently or repeatedly – while struggling with a disabling condition such as a serious mental illness, substance use disorder, or physical disability. Hennepin County staff use the Homeless Management Information System to identify people in our shelters and on our streets who are chronically homeless. Then staff from the Hennepin County Homeless Access team connect and engage them while staff working on the Coordinated Entry System prioritize them for vacancies in housing programs. In 2018, staff identified 118 of the most vulnerable residents in our community and connected them to housing with supportive services using this process.

Data system helps identify inequities

People of color are more likely to face homelessness in the United States. Hennepin County wants to know why, so we are partnering with the Supporting Partnerships for Anti-Racist Communities (SPARC) action-research project. SPARC offers numerous insights for addressing homelessness in ways that are comprehensive and racially equitable. SPARC uses data and in-depth interviews with people who have experienced homelessness to examine our system, identify problem areas and develop plans to address factors that are leading to disparate outcomes for people of color and American Indians. This is done through a two-pronged approach of research and action and has prompted intensive focus on investing in low-barrier housing programs with culturally specific programming. In the last year Hennepin County has supported the American Indian Community Development Corporation in opening two such site-based housing programs for people with substance use disorder which can accommodate 34 people at any given time, with a third scheduled for 2019.

Pilot program prevents evictions

In partnership with the McKnight Foundation and the Pohlad Family Foundation, Hennepin County launched a pilot at NorthPoint Health and Wellness Center, a medical, dental, mental health and human services agency in North Minneapolis, to prevent eviction filings among residents who fall behind in rent. The pilot brought together financial assistance, case management, legal advice and counsel, and mediation services to rectify late rent payments and other issues that could lead to residents losing their housing. Of the 166 households that participated in the Eviction Prevention Pilot, 146 were able to avoid an eviction filing, 161 were able to avoid a judgement that resulted in an eviction, 149 did not have an address change and only seven had to use emergency shelter.

Resources

Heading Home Hennepin

Stay connected. Visit hennepin.us/headinghomehennepin for information on current initiatives, community committees and current data. You can also sign up for the monthly newsletter to get the most current information.

Hennepin Housing Key

This search site is designed to provide accurate and up-to-date housing openings and new developments for clients with special housing needs who may be homeless or facing homelessness. Visit hennepin.us/housingkey

Hennepin Waypoint

This web-based application connects people experiencing homelessness or extreme financial hardship to services they need using interactive maps. Visit hennepin.us/waypoint

Hennepin County Board of Commissioners

- Mike Opat, District 1
- Irene Fernando, District 2
- Marion Greene, District 3
- Angela Conley, District 4
- Debbie Goettel, District 5
- Jan Callison, District 6
- Jeff Johnson, District 7

Hennepin County

- David Hough, administrator
- Jennifer DeCubellis, Health and Human Services, deputy county administrator

Human Services

- Jodi Wentland, assistant county administrator
- Michael Herzing, director
- David Hewitt, senior department administrator, Housing Stability

