District of Columbia
Interagency Council on Homelessness

Inflow Analysis
COG Homeless Services Subcommittee
July 19, 2018
Overall, there has been a **-7.6% decrease** in people who are experiencing homelessness in the District from 2017 to 2018.

The number of families has **decreased by -20.8%**.

However, there has been an **increase of 5.2%** in single households.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household Type</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>% Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Persons</strong></td>
<td>6,904</td>
<td>7,473</td>
<td><strong>-7.6%</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Singles</strong></td>
<td>3,770</td>
<td>3,583</td>
<td><strong>5.2%</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Single Adults</strong></td>
<td>3,761</td>
<td>3,578</td>
<td><strong>5.1%</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Unaccompanied Minors</strong></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td><strong>80%</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Family Units</strong></td>
<td>924</td>
<td>1,166</td>
<td><strong>-20.8%</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Family Members</strong></td>
<td>3,134</td>
<td>3,890</td>
<td><strong>-19.4%</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adults in Families</strong></td>
<td>1,210</td>
<td>1,609</td>
<td><strong>-24.8%</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Children in Families</strong></td>
<td>1,924</td>
<td>2,281</td>
<td><strong>-15.7%</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Count of unaccompanied individuals (single adults) is up 5%, to 3,761 people.

This increase is despite having assisted over 1,200 single adults to exit the streets or shelter to permanent housing between PIT 2017 and 2018.

Likewise, the number of individuals experiencing chronic homelessness is up 8% from 2017.
Inflow Analysis

- In order to intervene sooner, we need to understand:
  - How many people experience homelessness for the first time each year, are episodically-homeless, or return after being housed in one of our programs (e.g., RRH or PSH)?
  - How long have they been accessing services in our CoC?
  - What led to their homelessness?

- TCP conducted a “look-back” of historical CoC system-use of unaccompanied individuals counted in emergency shelter during PIT 2018 to better understand system inflow and usage patterns.

- This was done with the intent to look at how many of the individuals were:
  - Experiencing homelessness again after a previous exit from the CoC to some kind of permanent housing (i.e. placement in PSH, documented exit to housing on their own, etc.);
  - In their first and only episode of experiencing homelessness; OR
  - In one of multiple episodes of homelessness over time.
In analyzing system utilization, it became clear that many people have multiple, short breaks in service throughout their service history.

- The length of breaks suggests people are still likely experiencing homelessness but just not accessing shelter.
- Accordingly, we treated this as a single episode.

With this in mind, TCP broke the persons served at PIT 2018 into one of four cohorts based on their unique service patterns:

1. Previously housed, but returned to the CoC
2. Multiple, distinct episodes (services received a year or more apart)
3. First/only episode that has lasted more than one year
4. First/only episode that has lasted less than one year
## Inflow: Service Pattern

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Category #1: Previously housed, but returned to CoC</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category #2: Multiple episodes (services rec'd a year or more apart)</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category #3: First/only episode, has lasted more than one year</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category #4: First/only episode, has lasted less than one year</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>22%</td>
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</table>
Category #1: Returns from CoC Housing Programs

- Defined as individuals who have a documented exit from the CoC to a permanent housing destination but who have returned to shelter.

- Roughly equates to our high performance in Housing Stability among PSH programming

- Of those returning:
  - Most were returning after an exit from PSH (as opposed to RRH or housing on their own).
  - High prevalence of disabling conditions in this category, as expected.
Category #2: Multiple Episodes

- Defined as individuals who were in shelter at PIT with histories of experiencing homelessness, but with breaks of 12 months or more between receiving services.

- Of those with 2 distinct episodes, the average span of time between the episodes was 4 years though breaks as long as 11-12 years were seen as well.

![Distribution of Number of Episodes for Persons in Multiple Episodes Group](image-url)
Category #3: 1st/Only Time Homeless (>1 year)

- 28% of women and 31% of men served at PIT.
- Half of the men and women in this category are age 55 or older.
33% of women and 22% of men served at PIT were in their first year of their first episode, annually estimated at 501 women and 1496 men.

Based on this analysis and other length of stay analyses, we estimate that 12% of this group will “self-resolve.”
- The majority will end up in one of the other three categories unless we provide assistance.
- Original modeling for Homeward DC assumed we could prevent/divert 10% of individuals entering shelter and that 30% would self-resolve with a short shelter stay.
- This has significant implications for resource needs.

Men in this category reported lower rates of disabling conditions than other categories; underscores the importance of employment assistance.
There is limited information on what may have caused a person’s homelessness; it is often the result of several interrelated factors.

TCP identified 4 areas where persons in shelter report that either something specifically caused their experience or could have been a factor:

- Unemployment/no income
- Institutional Discharge
- Disabling Conditions/Poor Health
- Domestic Violence

No large/significant distinctions across the four categories.
Residency

Zip Code of Last Place of Residency At Shelter Intake

All Categories

- District of Columbia: 76%
- Maryland (Washington Metro Area): 12%
- Virginia (Washington Metro Area): 10%
- Outside Washington Metro Area: 2%

1st Time Less Than Year Only

- District of Columbia: 55%
- Maryland (Washington Metro Area): 25%
- Virginia (Washington Metro Area): 18%
- Outside Washington Metro Area: 3%
Key Takeaways

- **The Good News:** The majority of people served through CoC housing programs are remaining stably housed.

- **The Bad News:** Very few people are able to resolve their homelessness on their own.
  - Very different from the original assumptions used in the Homeward DC modeling.
  - Has significant implications for resources needed for the plan.
Key Takeaways

- Significant number of returning citizens enter the shelter system each year.
  - Given criminal history, returning citizens struggle to find housing and employment on their own.
  - However, homeless services system allocates limited housing resources based on medical vulnerability and length of time homeless.
  - Would be much more cost effective to intervene with this population earlier.
  - Reentry system needs housing resources that it can allocate based on a separate set of criteria (e.g., risk of recidivism, risk of homelessness)
Small numbers of people coming from multiple different counties/states have a significant impact on DC.

- Surrounding counties may not have available or accessible shelter but likely have more housing stock.
  - District housing dollars can only be used in the District.
  - Clients with vouchers in hand are spending months looking for an available unit.
  - Competition for affordable units is putting upward pressure on rents.
- Stronger regional coordination would allow us to serve clients more effectively.

The small breaks in shelter usage suggests many people may have other places they are already accessing for periods of time

- Diversion efforts likely need to be paired with more intensive supports to ensure arrangements are longer-lasting
- Jobs are critical; too many jobs are temporary, seasonal, or part-time
Immediate Next Steps

- Data match with Montgomery County to learn more about migration patterns.
  - High non-response rate on the residency question among low-barrier shelter users.
  - Data sharing agreement with MC already in place.

- Client interviews over the summer to learn more about:
  - What first drove someone into shelter, and what could have altered that path?
  - When we see short breaks in service patterns, where are people going?
  - When people arrive from another county/state, what factors influenced their decision to come to the District?
System Reforms Funded in FY19 Budget

❖ Begin work to transform the “front door”
  ✓ Funding for a new 801 East Men’s Shelter
  ✓ Funding for a diversion program for single adults

❖ Continue work on “back door” strategies
  ✓ Additional funding for RRH, TAH, & PSH
  ✓ Improved targeting of permanent housing resources
Additional Needed Changes

- Stronger alignment with the workforce system
  - Pairing diversion and RRH assistance with employment assistance
  - More Learn & Earn employment opportunities needed
  - More full-time employment opportunities needed (seasonal & part-time jobs leads to significant income volatility)

- Additional housing resources for reentry system
  - Reentry Portal offers opportunity to test a “coordinated entry”-like system for returning citizens
Questions/Discussion