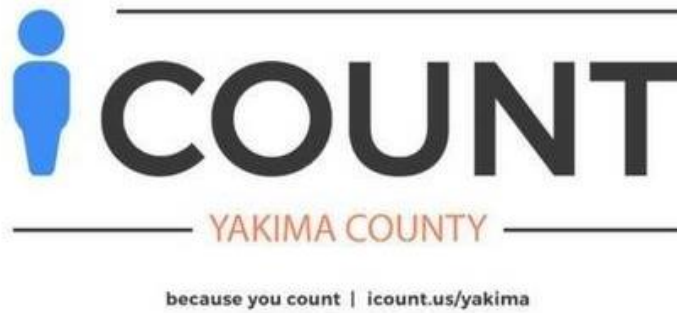MAY 1, 2019

**Yakima County
2019 Homeless Point-in-time Count
Process and Survey Results**

ACR BUSINESS CONSULTING
ACRBC.COM

iCOUNT
— YAKIMA COUNTY —
because you count | icount.us/yakima

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The Homeless Point-in-time Count: Overview

The Homeless Point-in-Time (PIT) count is a requirement by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)[1]. HUD requires communities to submit a count of the homeless population in their area as well as information on specific sub-populations, including chronically homeless persons, veterans, and unaccompanied youth.

A PIT count is composed of two parts: a *sheltered* PIT count, which is required every year, and an *unsheltered* PIT count, which is required at least every other year. Communities submit this data annually through their Continuum of Care (CoC) applications for Homeless Assistance Grants. The Washington State Homelessness Housing and Assistance Act (ESSHB 2163 - 2005) requires each county to conduct an annual PIT count of sheltered and unsheltered homeless persons in Washington State in accordance with the requirements of HUD[2]. The count takes place in January each year with the date set by HUD. For 2019, the date of the count was Thursday, January 25.

Many communities, including Yakima County, develop their sheltered count from their Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) data. Yakima County also facilitates in-person surveys to add additional demographic detail beyond just a number. HUD does not prescribe the survey method to use but does provide guidance on survey techniques.

The unsheltered count is more complicated and costly to conduct than the sheltered count, and HUD is stricter about the acceptable methodologies for performing this count. Because unsheltered persons are not generally recorded in HMIS, communities have much more planning to do to account for unsheltered individuals. There are 3 accepted methodologies provided by HUD to conduct an unsheltered count:

1. **Street counts**. Community volunteers visit the streets and locations where they expect to find homeless individuals and count them based on observation over a very specific period (usually between dusk and dawn on a single night). This method is relatively easy to organize, train volunteers to conduct, and carry out. However simple to carry out, this method invariably misses some people, and little information is gained beyond the total number of unsheltered persons.
2. **Street count with an interview**. With this approach, count participants are trained to interview every person they encounter who appears to be unsheltered. The sample-with-interview approach yields a much richer level of data to the community, but tends to be more complicated to de-duplicate.
3. **Service-based count.** The community counts people as they receive homeless services during the specific count period. Service-based counts can extend beyond 1 day, but cannot exceed 7 days after the date of the count. Communities using the service-based approach will often plan a specific event that is likely to attract homeless persons such as a special breakfast or healthcare-related offering. Although this method requires the community to carefully determine who has already been counted, it tends to reach a particular homeless population that chooses to use the supportive services available, including soup kitchens, drop-in centers, and street outreach teams, and who would otherwise be difficult to count because of where they choose to sleep.

To determine the most appropriate methodology to use, communities need to evaluate, among many things, their climate, size, and availability of resources. The number of anticipated participants in the count and the size of the area often drive the method that is chosen. However, several communities use a combination of these methodologies.

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[1]Office of Policy Development and Research (PD&R) U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development: https://www.huduser.gov/portal/periodicals/em/summer12/highlight2.html

[2] Washington State Department of Commerce: http://www.commerce.wa.gov/Programs/housing/Homeless/Pages/Annual-Point-In-Time-Count.aspx

In addition to homeless population data, HUD requires communities to submit subpopulation data on chronically homeless individuals and families, veterans, severely mentally ill individuals, chronic substance users, persons with HIV/AIDS, those fleeing domestic violence, and unaccompanied children (under 18). When the subpopulation data is incomplete, communities use sampling and extrapolation methods to derive their counts.

The Homeless Point-in-time Count: iCount Yakima County Goals

For the 2019 Homeless Point-in-time (PIT) Count, the Yakima Valley Conference of Governments partnered with ACR Business Consulting to facilitate the PIT Count. ACR Business Consulting was hired to facilitate the 2018 Yakima County Count, and has facilitated prior PIT Counts for Thurston County and worked with the City of Olympia on homeless strategy. The firm aims to collaborate with agencies and organizations that work with homeless neighbors, and utilizes the overarching brand "iCount" to build local community support for volunteers, donations, and outreach efforts.

The goals for the 2019 PIT count in Yakima County were to:

1) Maximize the scope of the one-day count through county-wide outreach efforts utilizing a thorough and cost effective approach.
2) Partner with the Yakama Nation to gain a more accurate representation of who is struggling with homelessness across the local communities.
3) Implement tools on which to build to assist with census efforts in future years.
4) Pursue high quality and consistent data collection in order to begin to glean new insights from year-to-year.
5) Collect and report relevant information to inform and educate local community citizens, policy makers, and funders.

1) Maximize the Scope of the One-day Count
Yakima County has a strong network of homeless service agencies who have established trust with community members struggling to find housing stability. In close partnership with the service providers, ACR Business Consulting facilitated a one-day count beginning at 7 a.m. on Thursday, January 24, 2019. The blended methodology of **street counts with an interview** and **service-based counts** was consistent with the 2018 PIT Count approach and designed to connect with both sheltered and unsheltered homeless neighbors throughout Yakima County for the whole day.

The county was organized into 3 areas – Upper Valley, Mid Valley, and South Valley – and partner agencies and community volunteers were identified within each area. Volunteers were paired with agency leads to serve as roving teams throughout the areas, and also stationed on-site at agencies where appropriate, looking to connect with as many neighbors experiencing homelessness as possible. In addition to this, professional case workers and service providers facilitated the census as they met with individuals and families in need of assistance during normal business hours.

This strategy proved to provide a broad reach throughout the County for a second consecutive year. **In one day, the 2019 iCount Yakima County team of over 70 agency professionals and community volunteers facilitated <u>539 unique surveys representing 818 neighbors</u> of the Yakima County and Yakama Nation communities experiencing homelessness and housing instability.**

2) Partner with the Yakama Nation
The success of the 2019 PIT Count was directly influenced by the efforts put forth from team members and volunteers from the Yakama Nation Economic Development Office, Yakama Nation service providers and the Correctional Center. Their willingness to participate was instrumental in connecting census facilitators with members of the Yakama Nation and surrounding communities who are currently experiencing homelessness. In addition to supporting the street counts and service-based counts, the team from the Yakama Nation organized a successful event at the Yakama Nation Cultural Center to facilitate the census as well as bring together a variety of services for homeless neighbors living within the Yakama Nation and Toppenish areas.

To help inform the Yakama Nation, a supplemental Tribal Affiliation Survey was created for the 2019 PIT Count. The results from this survey are included in this report. The goal is to continue to partner with the Yakama Nation for the annual PIT Count and enhance these data collection strategies to help inform both the Yakama Nation and the Yakima County communities.

3) Implement Tools to Assist with Census Efforts for Future Years
ACR Business Consulting efforts are designed to build off of the strong community involvement across Yakima County already in place. In 2018 the iCount brand established a Facebook presence for the Yakima County PIT for community members to continue to post and share information on issues related to homelessness. A dedicated webpage for PIT Count volunteer recruitment, sponsorship and donations was also established. Both of these assets were utilized again for the 2019 PIT Count and helped to organize efforts. Through the iCount Yakima County platform, the team recruited over 30 community volunteers and raised funds to be used to purchase sleeping bags to handout to survey participants. For the 2019 PIT Count, the iCount team was able to secure over 400 sleeping bags, up from 250 the prior year.

4) Pursue High Quality Data Collection
To maintain data consistency and quality, the custom census surveys were utilized by iCount Yakima County volunteers and agencies again for the 2019 PIT Count. These surveys incorporate the required PIT Count questions from HUD and the Washington State Department of Commerce while allowing for communities to identify and include questions that offer relevant data to inform local policy.

The survey data quality relied on participants authorizing the use of their information by way of signature. This allows duplicate surveys to be identified, and it significantly reduced the likelihood of double entry into the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) across the unsheltered and sheltered counts. **For the 2019 PIT Count, the iCount Yakima County team of agency professionals and community volunteers did a truly remarkable job connecting with homeless neighbors to gather complete surveys with a signature rate for eligible surveys[3] of over 97%.**

5) Collect and Report Information to Inform Local Community Citizens, Policy Makers, and Funders
The 2019 PIT Count utilized the single census form for both sheltered and unsheltered survey participants. The form is designed to make it easier for survey collectors to gather necessary information from census participants and provide a consistent and wider sample set of data for analysis and reporting. The facilitation of the PIT count is a HUD requirement and takes real time, energy, and resources to be inclusive and impactful. Beyond the federally mandated survey questions there is

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[3] Census participants currently fleeing domestic violence or who are HIV positive are not supposed to provide a signature or other identifying information in order to protect their confidentiality.

relevant information that can be collected utilizing the efforts already required to facilitate the PIT Count. For the 2019 PIT Count, questions about the most critical services benefiting homeless neighbors as well as questions on housing search efforts and household income levels were incorporated. The topic of housing affordability and access is currently a major focal point across the United States and in Yakima County. With median home prices continuing to rise and accessibility for low and no income neighbors becoming more difficult, questions were added to the survey this year to gauge efforts by homeless neighbors to secure housing, and to better understand the reality of barriers these households face in finding stability.

Qualifying the Yakima County Annual PIT Count Results

Data that is compiled and reported comes directly from survey responses received from homeless neighbors across the Yakima County and Yakama Nation on the day of the Point-in-time Count. This data represents the best known information about homeless community members based on those who are willing to participate in a voluntary survey. *This group of survey participants is a sample of the complete population of community members struggling with homelessness and housing instability and should not be taken as the definitive number of homeless individuals and households within the Yakima County and Yakama Nation.*

The Department of Commerce recognizes that the annual number of homeless community members reported from HMIS represents the best available data and is based on many factors including HMIS reporting requirements, HUD homeless classifications, number of partner agencies utilizing HMIS, accuracy of data reported to HMIS for emergency shelter and transitional housing programs, weather the day of the PIT Count, and willingness of homeless neighbors to participate in the survey.

This report is intended to support the efforts of public agencies and nonprofit service providers in securing and expanding funding for programs assisting homeless neighbors in Yakima County. The following section provides a look at key results from the surveys collected, provides an analysis of the demographic make-up of those surveyed, and calls attention to trends and significant factors presented from the data year-over-year to inform service providers. This report can serve as an educational tool for the community to work together to understand the reality of who is facing homelessness in Yakima County, and the efforts these neighbors put forth and barriers they face in returning to stable housing. The underlying data set has been submitted to the Yakima Valley Conference of Governments and is available for additional analysis as needed.
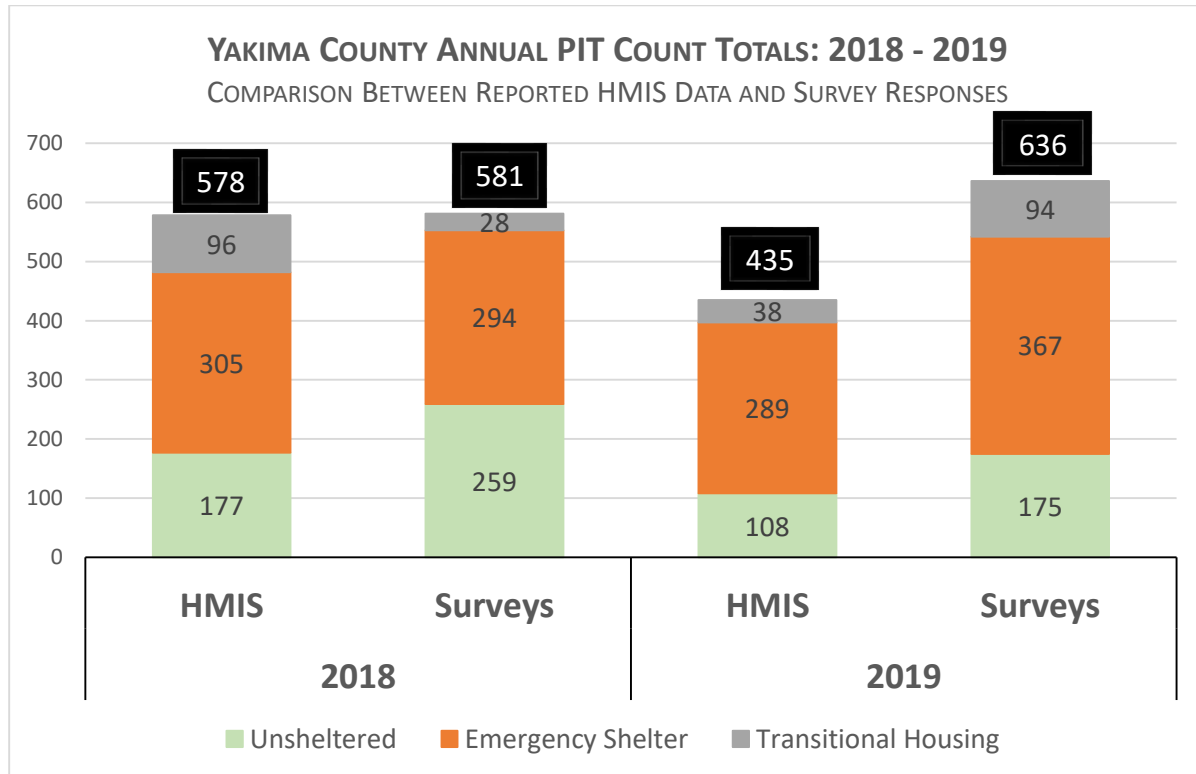
Totals reported from the PIT Count are the result of data derived from the combination of surveys, HMIS Emergency Shelter and Transitional Housing program attendance entries on January 24, 2019 and de-duplicated in HMIS by the WA State Department of Commerce. Due to variances in the number of surveys collected and actual totals pulled from HMIS, both totals are reflected in this report.

2019 PIT Count: Total Community Members Reported Homeless from Survey Responses and HMIS Data

PIT Count Key Demographic Data reported from 2019 Surveys and Compared with results from 2018 Surveys

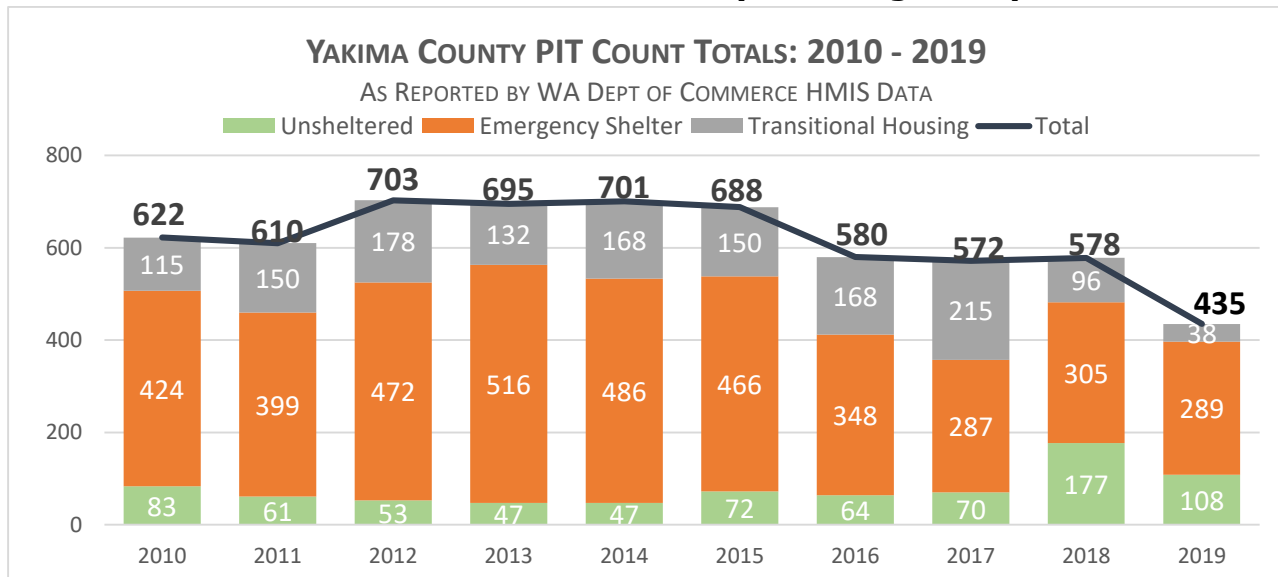|	2018	2019	Y-o-Y Change	% Change
Surveys Collected	443	539	+96	22%
Community Members Included	646	818	+172	27%
Unaccompanied Youth <18	4	5	+1	25%
18 - 24 YR	35	57	+22	63%
Singles +24	342	359	+17	5%
Families with children	61	86	+25	41%
Dependents < 18	140	189	+49	35%
Seniors +55	136	126	-10	-7%
Veterans	56	54	-2	-3%
Chronic Homeless (total household members)	203	172	-31	-15%

Location of Prior Night Stay for Homeless Community Members Reported from HMIS Data from WA Department of Commerce and Compared to Survey Data

YAKIMA COUNTY ANNUAL PIT COUNT TOTALS: 2018 - 2019
COMPARISON BETWEEN REPORTED HMIS DATA AND SURVEY RESPONSES

There are several factors that contributed to the significant reduction in reported homeless community members from HMIS data in 2019:
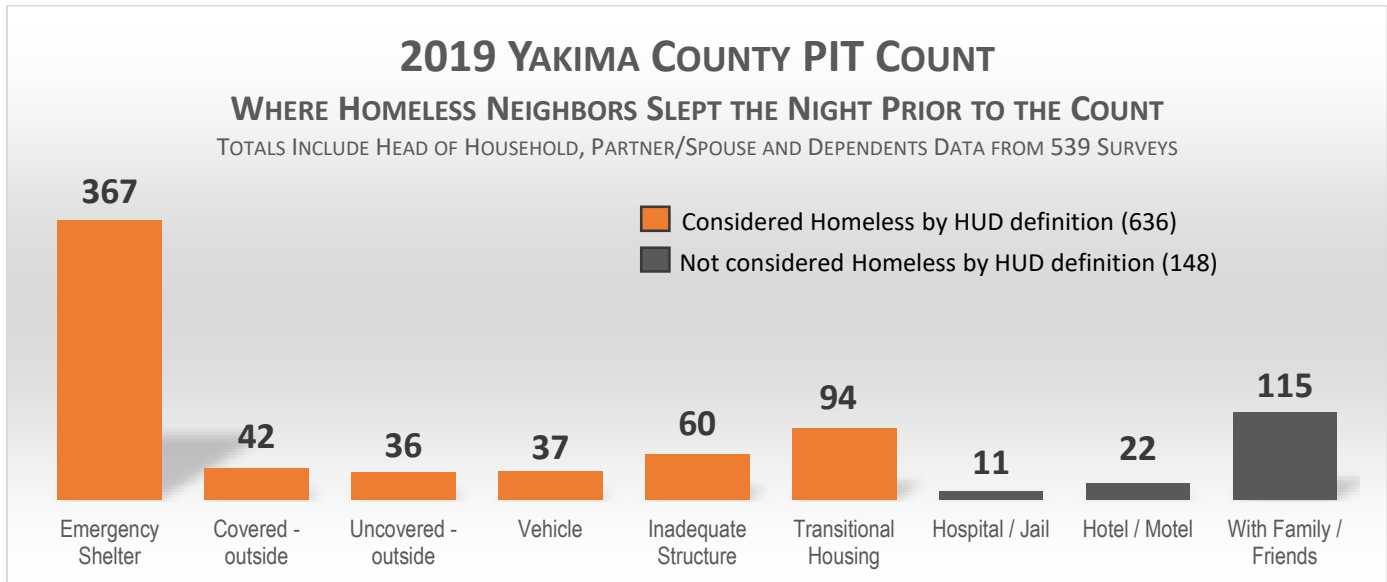
- A significant drop in transitional housing stays the night prior to the PIT Count was reported from HMIS for 2019 from 2018. This could be due to programs no longer serving those who are "literally homeless" or programs shutting down altogether. Survey data reflects a more consistent count however from the 2018 reported totals from HMIS.
- Any emergency shelter and transitional housings stays reflected in survey data as being provided by agencies within the Yakama Nation are not included in HMIS as these agencies are not required to utilize HMIS for data entry.
- Approximately 3.5 times more survey respondents indicated the prior night's stay was with family and friends in 2019 – a significant increase from 2018. This is a positive sign for community members experiencing homeless who may otherwise be sleeping unsheltered, but because this classification is excluded from the HUD definition of homelessness, it is also excluded from the total reported by the WA Department of Commerce.

Historical Totals of Community Members Reported Homeless from HMIS PIT Count Data by Prior Night Stay

YAKIMA COUNTY PIT COUNT TOTALS: 2010 - 2019
AS REPORTED BY WA DEPT OF COMMERCE HMIS DATA

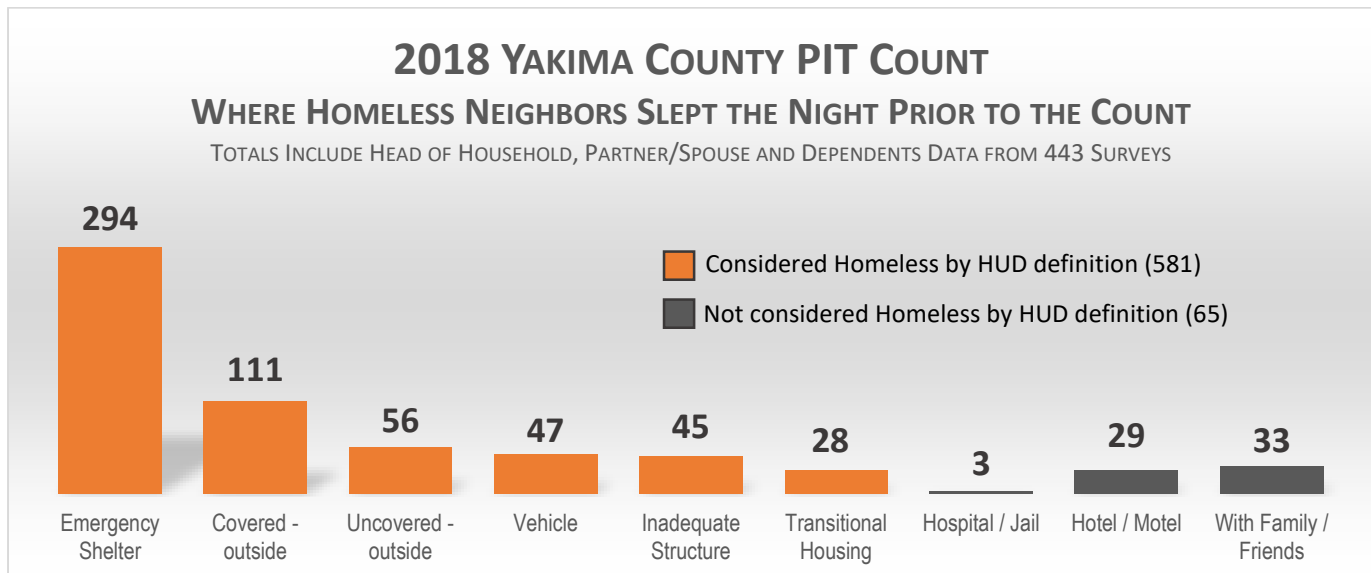| Year	Unsheltered	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Total
2010	83	424	115	622
2011	61	399	150	610
2012	53	472	178	703
2013	47	516	132	695
2014	47	486	168	701
2015	72	466	150	688
2016	64	348	168	580
2017	70	287	215	572
2018	177	305	96	578
2019	108	289	38	435

For the second year in a row, there is a large increase in unsheltered community members from the previous 8 years of data collected. Transitional Housing stays reported into HMIS were down considerably in both 2018 and 2019 from previously reported levels. Emergency Shelter numbers have remained consistent since 2017, but are down significantly from numbers reported from 2010 – 2016. Both of these counts are pulled directly from HMIS data for the night prior to the PIT Count. The drop in reported numbers for both could be due to agencies maintaining less shelter or transitional housing beds, closing transitional housing programs, or not being setup in HMIS to be included in the PIT Count reports. The Yakima County submits a Housing Inventory Chart to the Department of Commerce each year reporting all known shelters and transitional housing programs provided. It may be a worthwhile effort to focus on the completeness and accuracy of that report to include all agencies and organizations providing shelter and transitional housing services to Yakima County and the Yakama Nation regardless if they are utilizing HMIS themselves or not. This is something to explore in preparation for the 2020 PIT Count. If an agency is not using HMIS, they can be setup as a "shell program" so the data collected from their locations can be included in the annual totals to provide a more accurate picture.

The following charts show a more complete breakdown of where homeless neighbors stayed the night prior to the PIT count based on responses from survey participants. These totals provide greater insights into the specific unstable housing circumstances individuals are facing.

2019 YAKIMA COUNTY PIT COUNT

WHERE HOMELESS NEIGHBORS SLEPT THE NIGHT PRIOR TO THE COUNT

TOTALS INCLUDE HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD, PARTNER/SPOUSE AND DEPENDENTS DATA FROM 539 SURVEYS

- Considered Homeless by HUD definition (636)
- Not considered Homeless by HUD definition (148)

Emergency Shelter	Covered - outside	Uncovered - outside	Vehicle	Inadequate Structure	Transitional Housing	Hospital / Jail	Hotel / Motel	With Family / Friends
367	42	36	37	60	94	11	22	115

It is difficult to extrapolate too much from only 2 years of consistent data collection. However, year-over-year responses indicating where homeless neighbors found refuge the night prior to the count could suggest that efforts being put forth by the homeless service system are mitigating the circumstances leading to people having to sleep outside or in their vehicles.

The increase in shelter and transitional housing stays reported from surveys are most likely the result of including new service providers in the 2019 PIT count efforts. However, it is important that these programs are identified in HMIS in order to be included in the official reported number from the Department of Commerce. Additionally, the sizeable increase in people indicating they stayed with friends and family is perhaps a promising sign that folks have other support mechanisms on which to rely. Results from a third consecutive year of data could reinforce any potential trends.


2018 YAKIMA COUNTY PIT COUNT

WHERE HOMELESS NEIGHBORS SLEPT THE NIGHT PRIOR TO THE COUNT

TOTALS INCLUDE HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD, PARTNER/SPOUSE AND DEPENDENTS DATA FROM 443 SURVEYS

- Considered Homeless by HUD definition (581)
- Not considered Homeless by HUD definition (65)

Emergency Shelter	Covered - outside	Uncovered - outside	Vehicle	Inadequate Structure	Transitional Housing	Hospital / Jail	Hotel / Motel	With Family / Friends
294	111	56	47	45	28	3	29	33

2019 PIT Count: Partner Agency / Roving Locations and Surveys Collected at Each

2019 PIT Count Census Map and Counts

Total Surveys Received	539	+22%
1 – Upper Valley	346	+5%
2 – Middle Valley / Yakama Nation	190	+153%
3 – Southern Valley	3	- 92%

2018 PIT Count Census Map and Counts

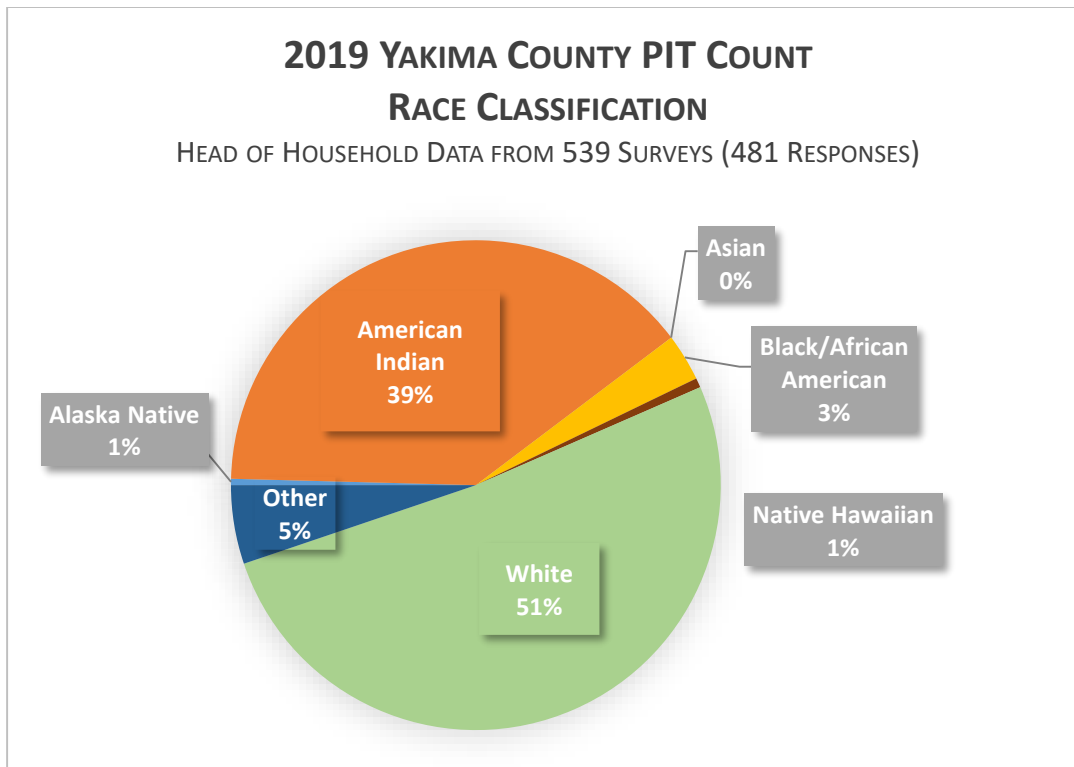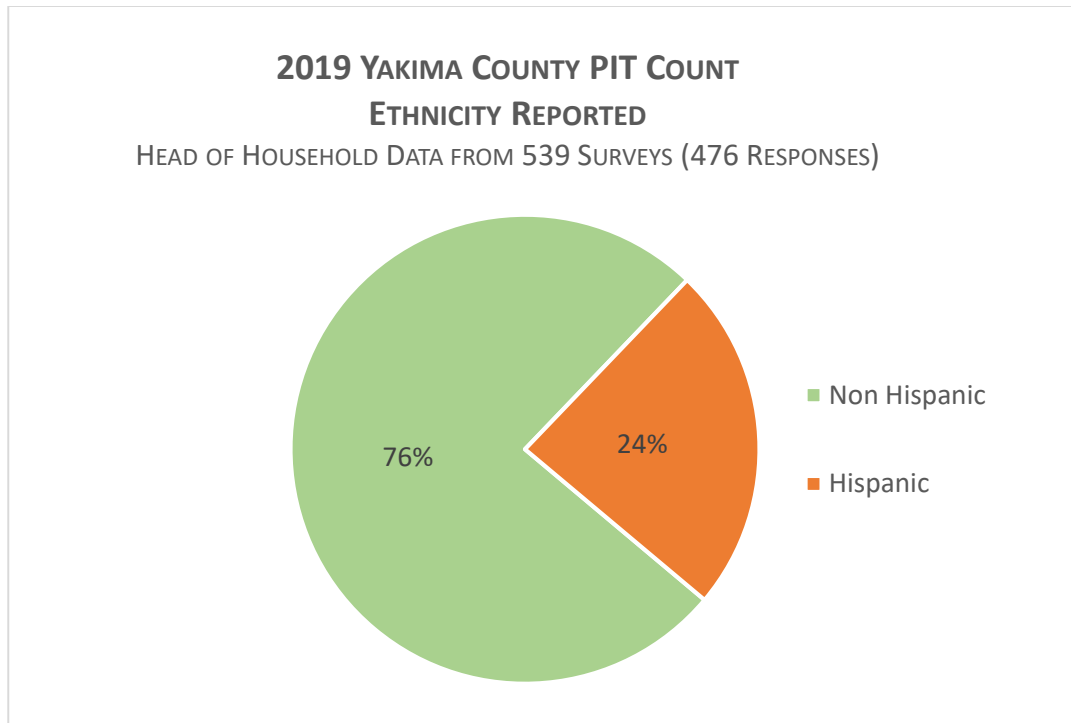| Total Surveys Received	443
1 – Upper Valley	330
2 – Middle Valley / Yakama Nation	75
3 – Southern Valley	38
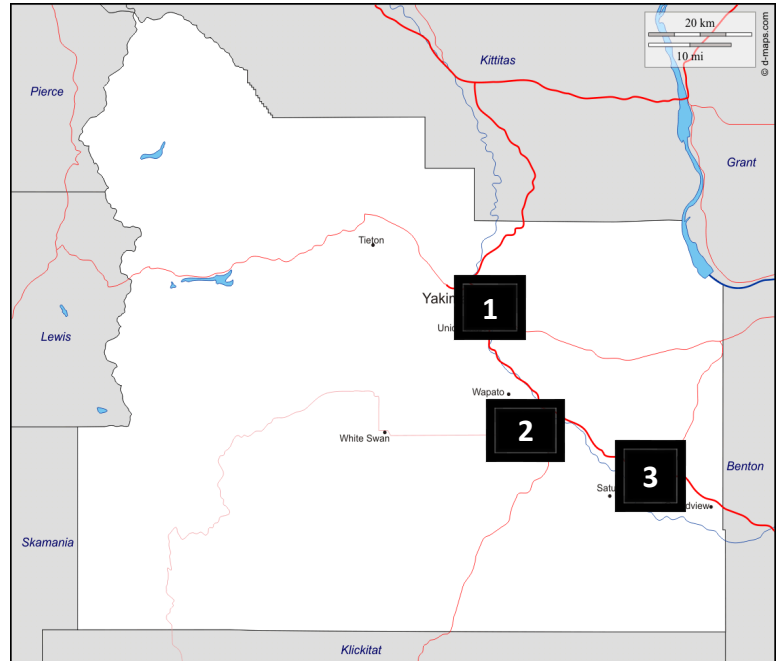
Survey responses were up significantly year-over-year in large part due to the efforts put forth by the agency representatives and volunteers from the Yakama Nation to organize an event at the Cultural Center as well as facilitate census surveys at the Yakama Nation Correctional Center, Iniitnu't Cold Weather Shelter and Village of Hope.

Significant and continued efforts from many partner organizations to facilitate surveys on-site as well as volunteer rovers actively looking for neighbors experiencing homelessness across the County contributed to the sizeable increase in the number of survey participants. The census results in the South County area were negatively affected by the closure of the Underground in Sunnyside and staffing difficulties with agency partners. This will be an area of focus for the 2020 PIT Count.
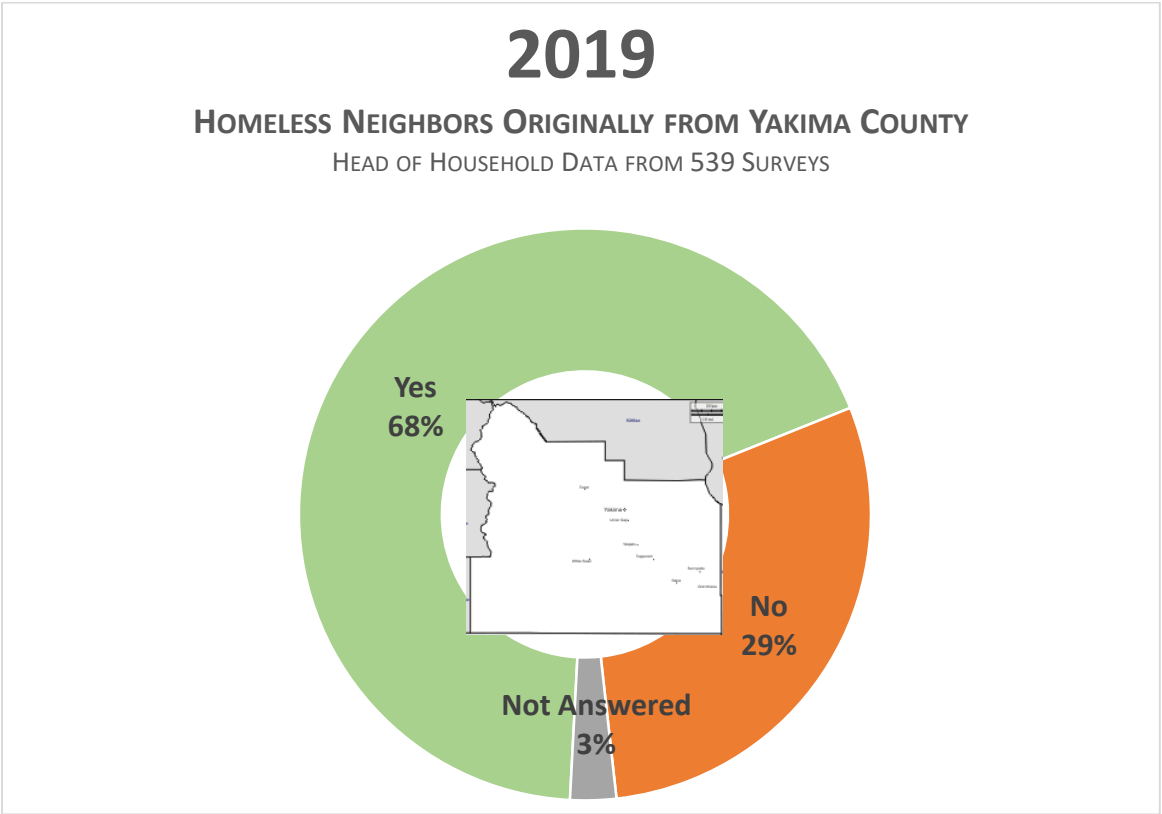
Partner Agencies for 2019 PIT Count Survey Facilitation		
	Surveys Collected	Area
Union Gospel Mission	147	1
Camp Hope	62	1
Sunrise Outreach	32	1
YNHS Depot (Yakima)	29	1
YWCA Yakima*	29	1
Rod's House	12	1
Yakima Rovers	12	1
Yakima County Veterans Program and Rovers	10	1
Yakima DSHS	8	1
Yakima Department of Corrections*	5	1
Yakama Nation Cultural Center Event*	104	2
Noah's Ark	34	2
Iniitnu't Cold Weather Shelter*	26	2
Village of Hope - Yakama Nation*	11	2
Yakama Nation Correctional Center*	7	2
Mid Valley Rovers*	5	2
Northwest Community Action Center	3	2
Entrust (Sunnyside)	2	3
YNHS (Sunnyside)	1	3
Total Surveys Collected	**539**	

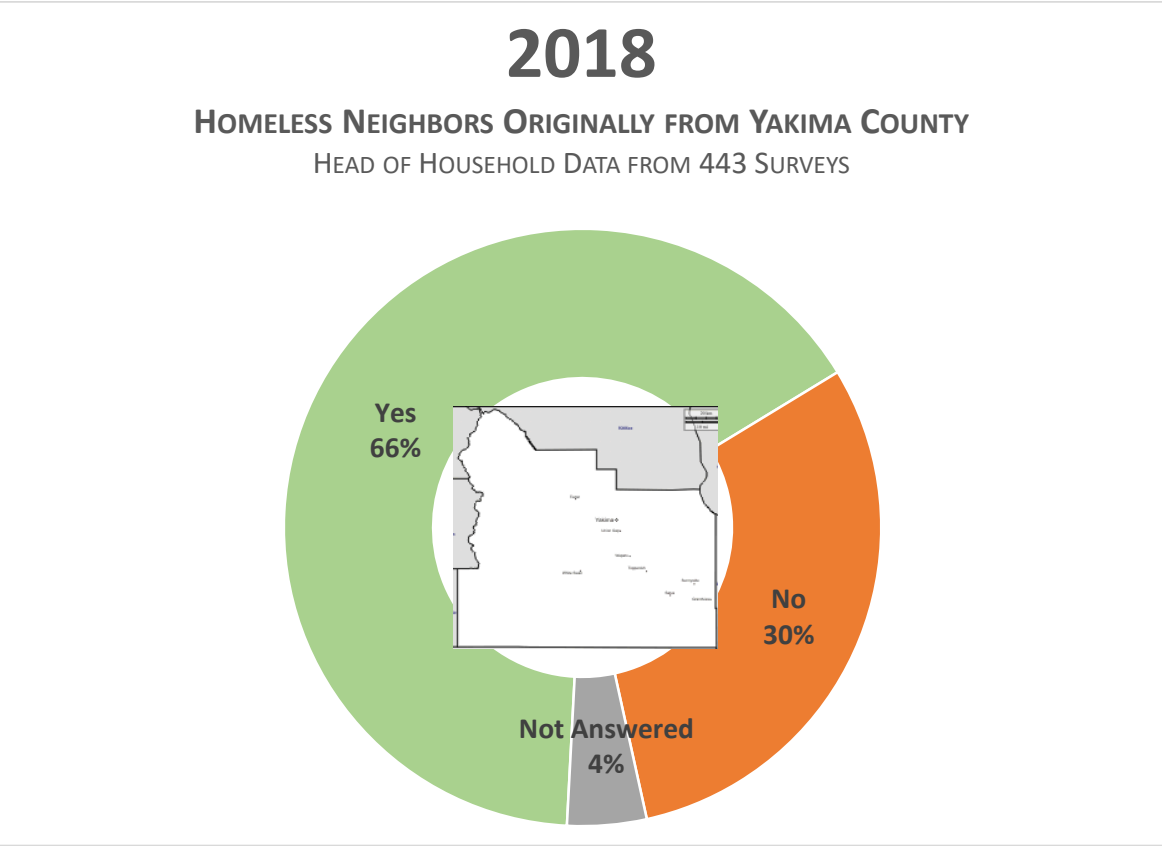*Denotes first time partners in the iCount Yakima County PIT Count efforts

2019 PIT Count: Annual Comparison of Demographic Data

2019 YAKIMA COUNTY PIT COUNT

ETHNICITY REPORTED

HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD DATA FROM 539 SURVEYS (476 RESPONSES)

- Non Hispanic — 76%
- Hispanic — 24%

2019 YAKIMA COUNTY PIT COUNT

RACE CLASSIFICATION

HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD DATA FROM 539 SURVEYS (481 RESPONSES)

- American Indian 39%
- Asian 0%
- Black/African American 3%
- Native Hawaiian 1%
- White 51%
- Other 5%
- Alaska Native 1%

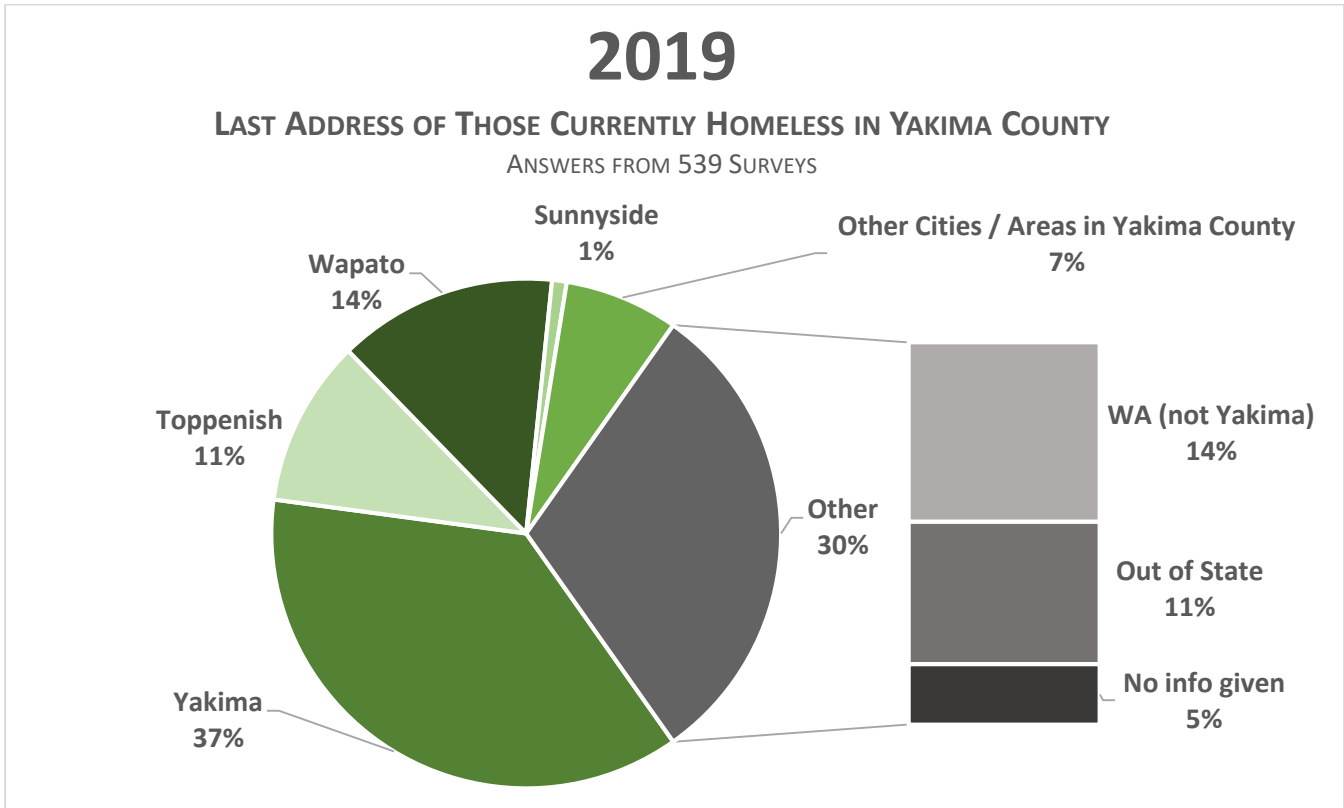Census results for both Ethnicty and Race showed a signifcant change from prior year results due to the contribution of census surveys from the Yakama Nation. In 2018, race classification of American Indian accounted for 20% of the reported race classification of survey particpants. The 2019 results have nearly doubled that, comprising 39% of all survey responses provided by a head of household.

2019

HOMELESS NEIGHBORS ORIGINALLY FROM YAKIMA COUNTY
HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD DATA FROM 539 SURVEYS

Yes
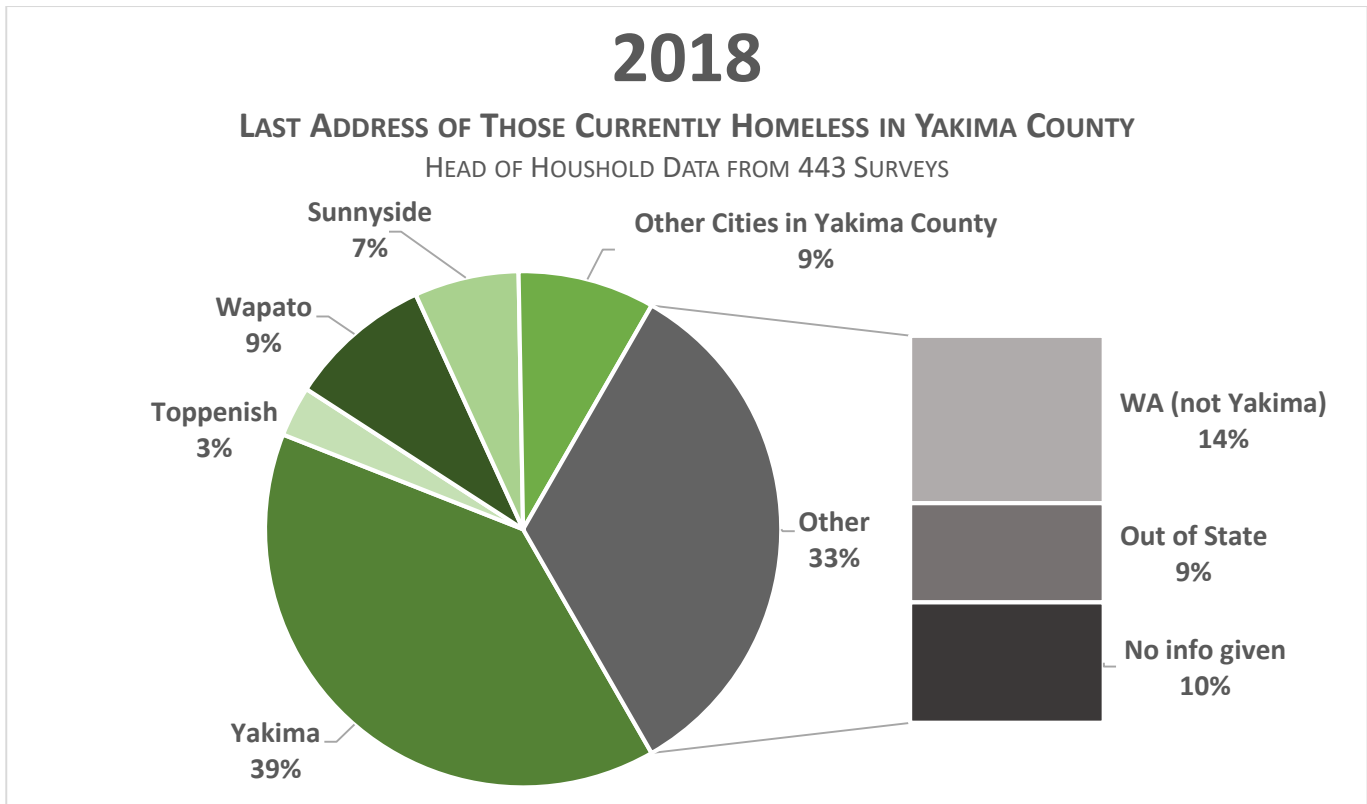68%

No
29%

Not Answered
3%

Despite the increased number of survey participants in 2019 from the previous year, the percentage of people reporting they are originally from Yakima County is almost identical year-over-year.

2018

HOMELESS NEIGHBORS ORIGINALLY FROM YAKIMA COUNTY
HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD DATA FROM 443 SURVEYS

Yes
66%

No
30%

Not Answered
4%

2019

Last Address of Those Currently Homeless in Yakima County

Answers from 539 Surveys

Sunnyside 1%

Wapato 14%

Other Cities / Areas in Yakima County 7%

Toppenish 11%

WA (not Yakima) 14%

Other 30%

Out of State 11%

Yakima 37%

No info given 5%

Similar to the constitency shown in the data on those orginally from Yakima County, the last known address for those who partitcated in the 2019 PIT Count are also very closely aligned to what was reported in the 2018 results.

2018

Last Address of Those Currently Homeless in Yakima County

Head of Houshold Data from 443 Surveys

Sunnyside 7%

Other Cities in Yakima County 9%

Wapato 9%

Toppenish 3%

WA (not Yakima) 14%

Other 33%

Out of State 9%

No info given 10%

Yakima 39%

2019 YAKIMA COUNTY PIT COUNT
GENDER CLASSIFICATION OF HOMELESS NEIGHBORS
DATA FROM 818 TOTAL INDIVIDUALS INCLUDED FROM IN 539 SURVEYS

1% (4)

| 51% (415) | 37% (302) | 12% (97) |

■ Male ■ Female ■ Transgender / Do not Identify ■ No info given
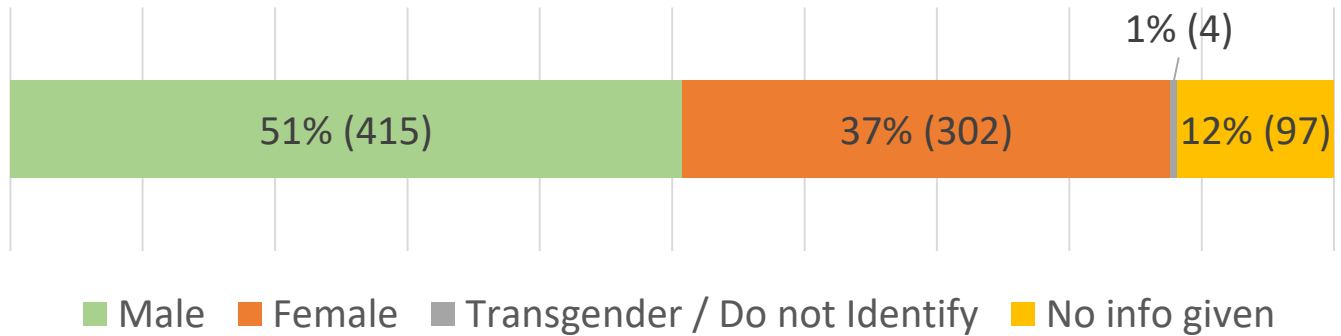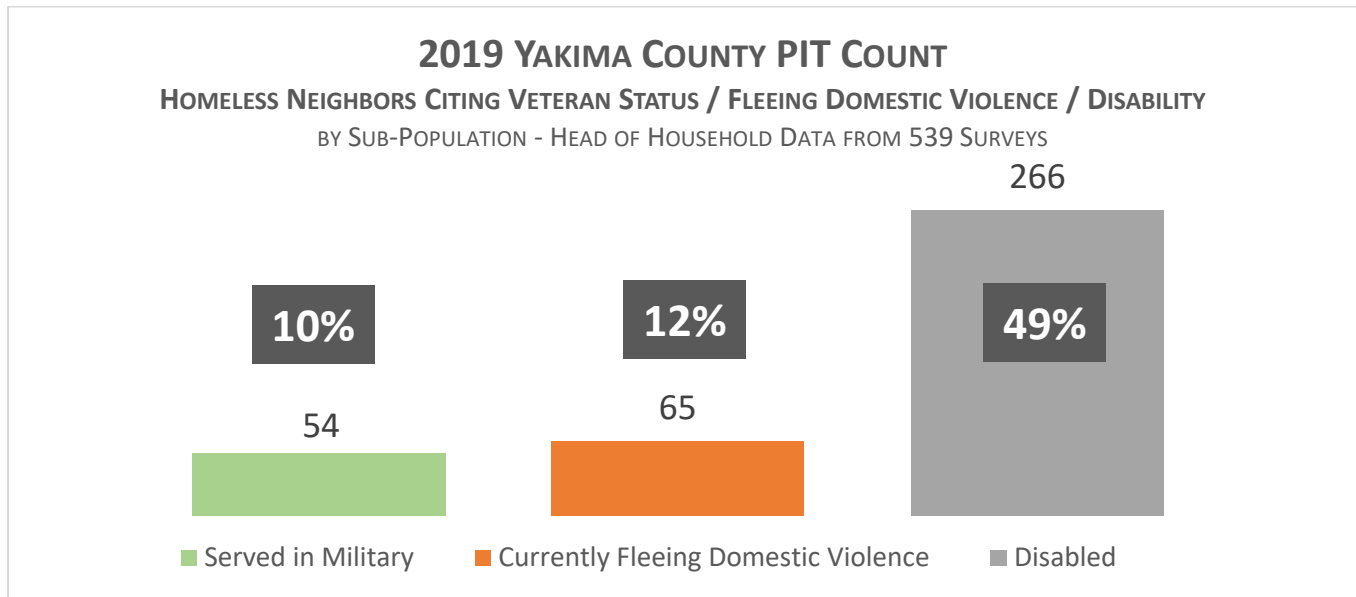
Prior year results showed that approximately 30% of the total population of homeless neighbors surveyed were female. 2019 results saw a noticeable jump up to 37% of the total population included in the census results. This is due primarily to the active participation in the census from the YWCA which runs a women's Domestic Violence Shelter and Transitional Housing Programs.

2018 YAKIMA COUNTY PIT COUNT
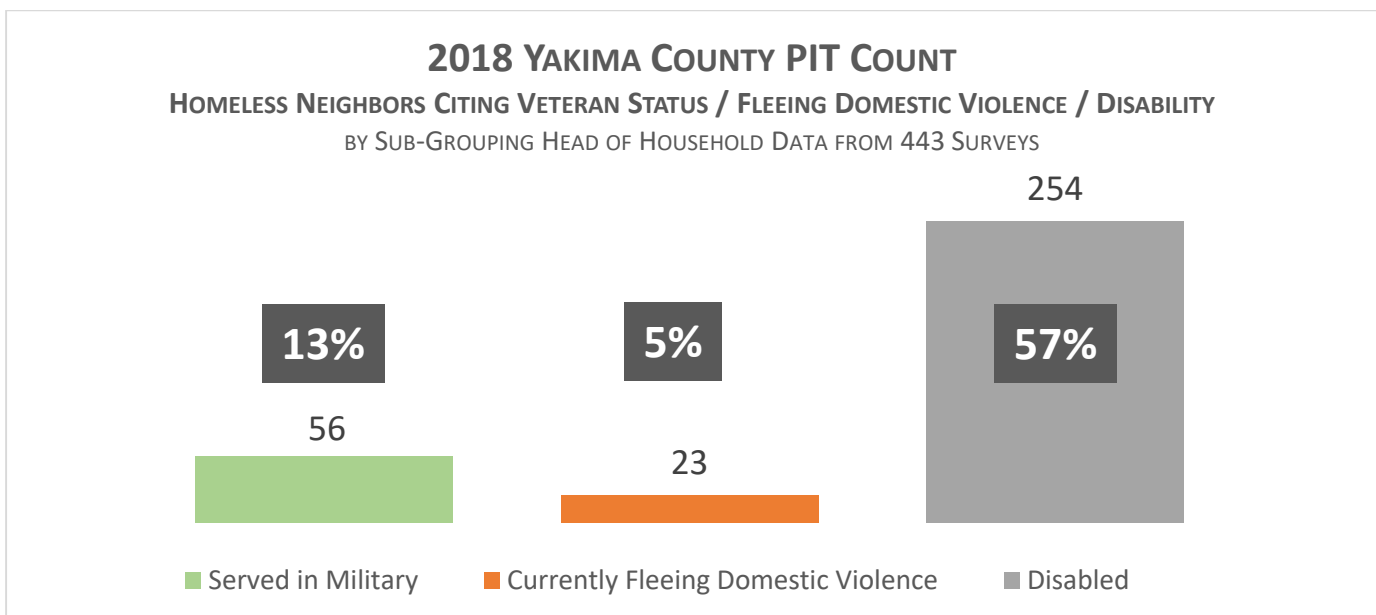### GENDER CLASSIFICATION OF HOMELESS NEIGHBORS
DATA FROM 646 TOTAL INDIVIDUALS INCLUDED IN 443 SURVEYS

1% (4)

| 52% (336) | 30% (197) | 17% (109) |

■ Male ■ Female ■ Transgender / Do not Identify ■ No info given

2019 YAKIMA COUNTY PIT COUNT

HOMELESS NEIGHBORS CITING VETERAN STATUS / FLEEING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE / DISABILITY

BY SUB-POPULATION - HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD DATA FROM 539 SURVEYS

266

10% **12%** **49%**

54 65

■ Served in Military   ■ Currently Fleeing Domestic Violence   ■ Disabled
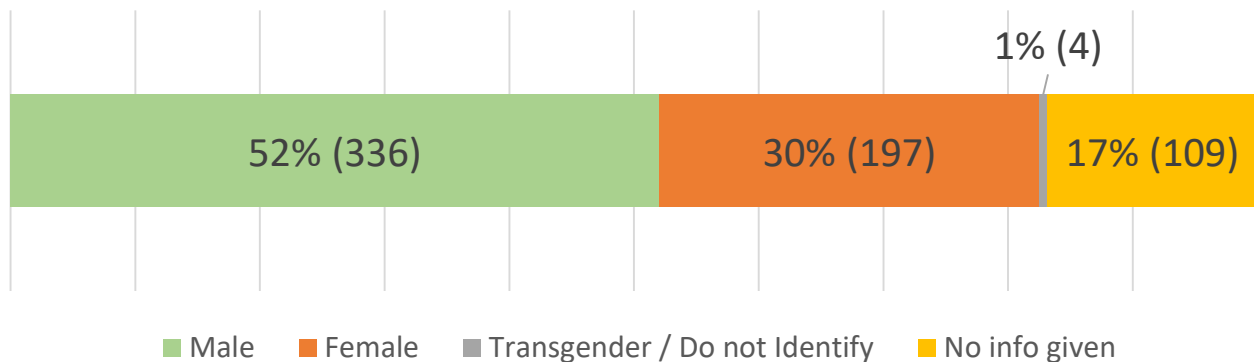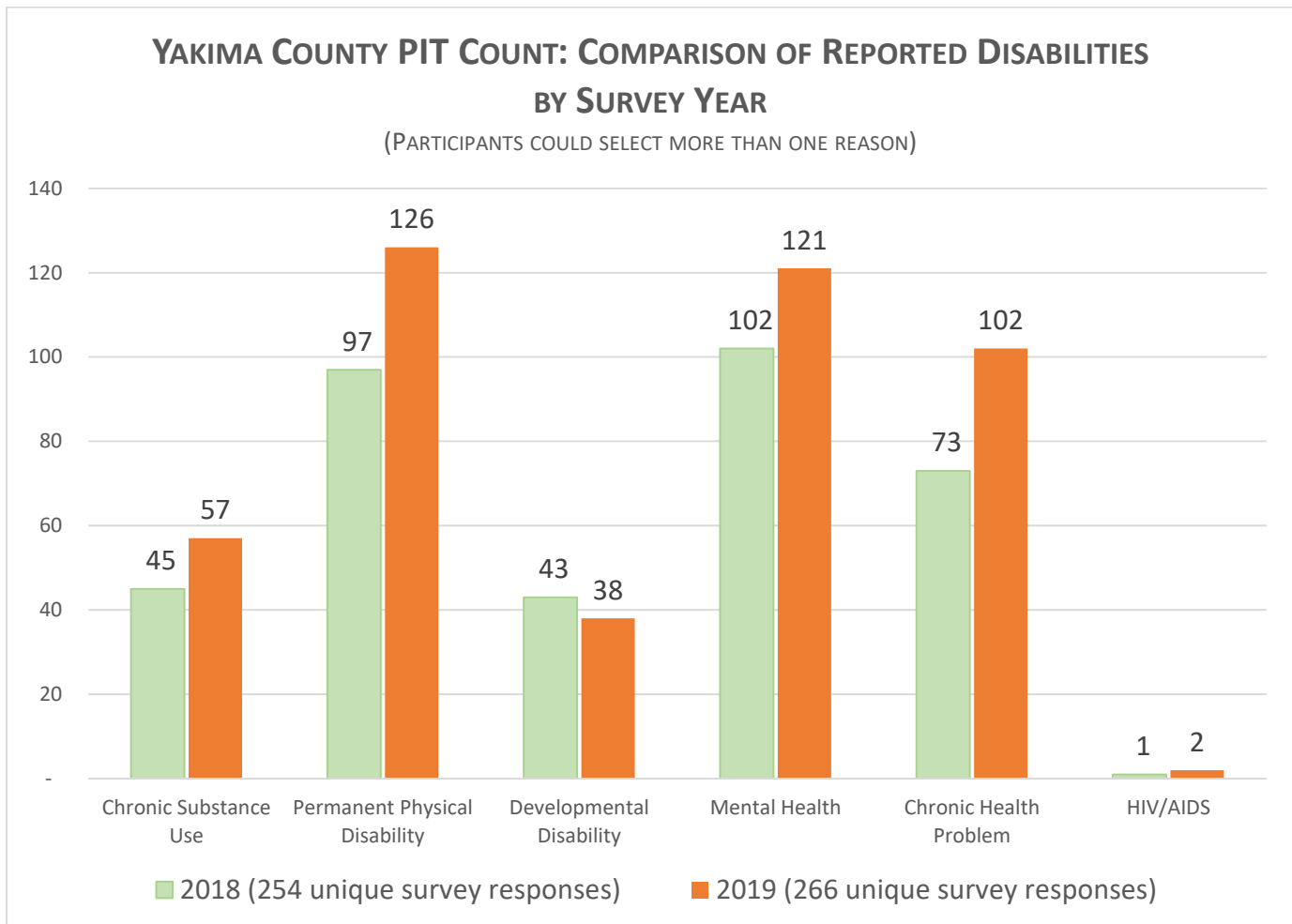
Key sub-identifications in the survey population from last year and this year reveal some insights into the general make-up of neighbors experiencing homelessness. The number of veterans that participated was very close in number from this year to last. This may indicate that veterans in the community experiencing homelessness may be more of a finite number of individuals within the community rather than a fluctuating percentage of the homeless population.
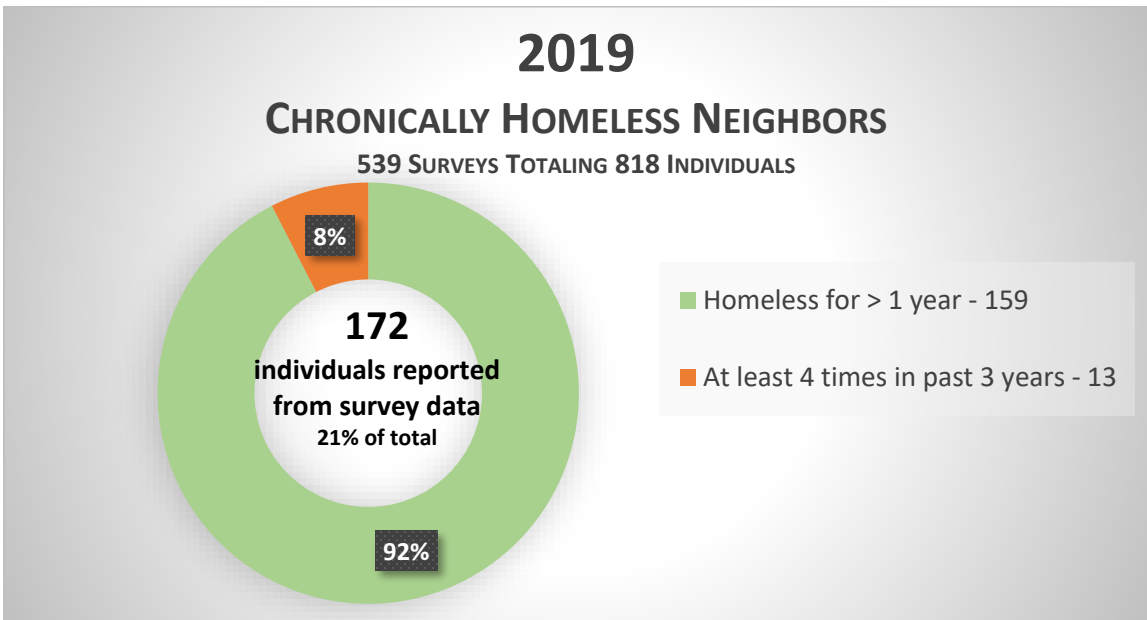
The sizable jump in those fleeing domestic violence year-over-year is directly related to the participation of the YWCA in the census. When adjusted for the YWCA 2019 PIT census forms, the number of reported survey participants fleeing domestic violence relative to the total is 7% versus 12% - still a significant portion of the survey population, but a number more closely aligned with 2018. The inclusion of the YWCA responses in the 2019 report indicate a more realistic and serious issue regarding domestic violence and its impacts on those experiencing homelessness and housing instability.

2018 YAKIMA COUNTY PIT COUNT

HOMELESS NEIGHBORS CITING VETERAN STATUS / FLEEING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE / DISABILITY

BY SUB-GROUPING HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD DATA FROM 443 SURVEYS

254

13% **5%** **57%**

56 23

■ Served in Military   ■ Currently Fleeing Domestic Violence   ■ Disabled
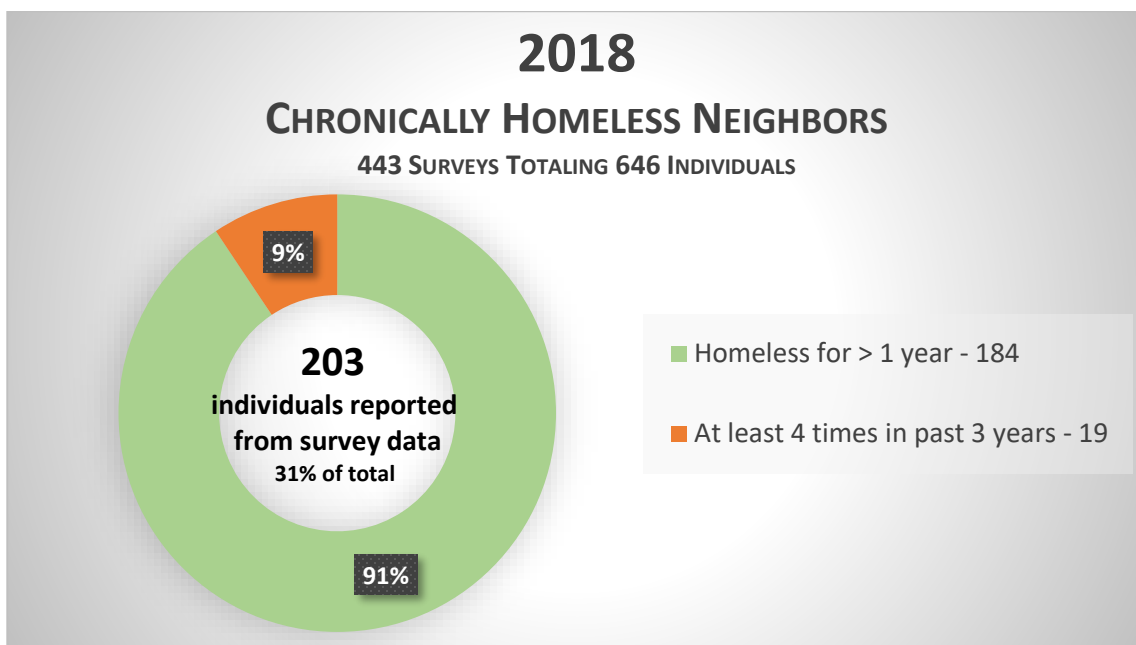
While total responses reporting a disability was up slightly from 2018 PIT data, there was a significant decrease in reported disabilities as a percentage of the total population surveyed. One interesting observation emerged from the data did emerge: there were 148 total survey respondents from the 4 survey locations located within the Yakama Nation. Of the 148 head of household respondents only 46 reported having a disability equaling 31%. When this group of 148 responses is removed from the larger survey response data set, and the remaining surveys analyzed, the percentage reporting a disability jumps up to approximately 56% which is more closely aligned to the 2018 reporting figure of 57% of the population. Here are how reported disabilities were reflected in the survey responses for the 2019 PIT Count compared to 2018:

YAKIMA COUNTY PIT COUNT: COMPARISON OF REPORTED DISABILITIES BY SURVEY YEAR
(PARTICIPANTS COULD SELECT MORE THAN ONE REASON)

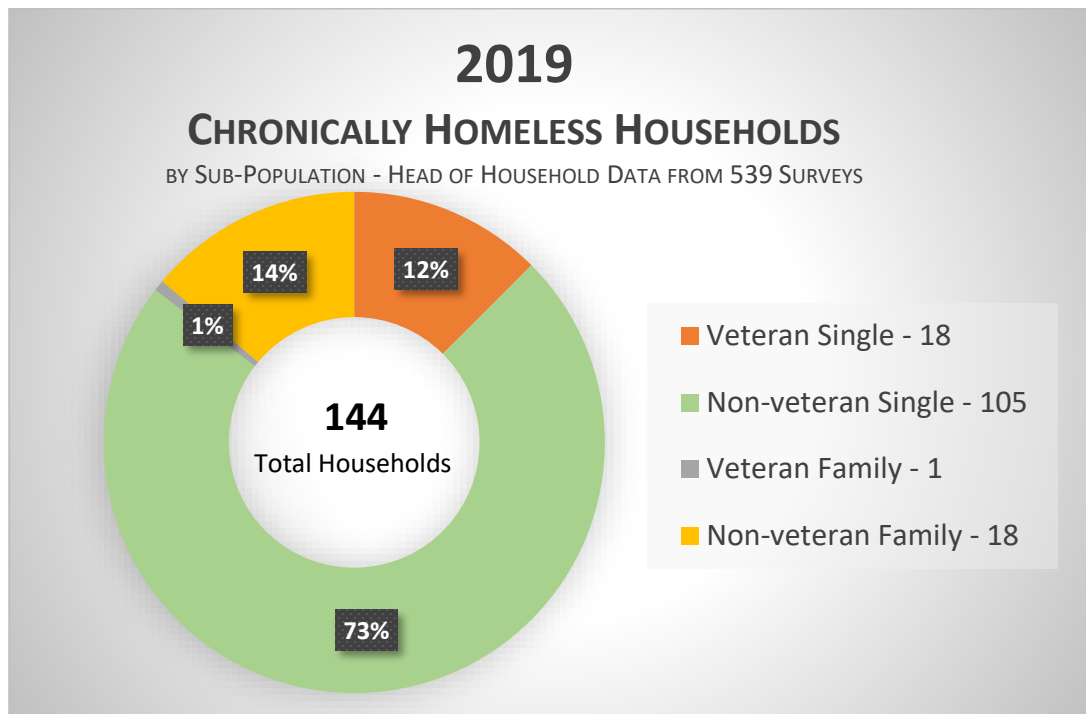|	Chronic Substance Use	Permanent Physical Disability	Developmental Disability	Mental Health	Chronic Health Problem	HIV/AIDS
2018 (254 unique survey responses)	45	97	43	102	73	1
2019 (266 unique survey responses)	57	126	38	121	102	2

Reported disabilities by head of household survey participants show an increase in the total number of all disabilities year-over-year with the exception of those reporting a developmental disability.

2019

CHRONICALLY HOMELESS NEIGHBORS

539 SURVEYS TOTALING 818 INDIVIDUALS

8%

172
individuals reported
from survey data
21% of total

92%

- Homeless for > 1 year - 159
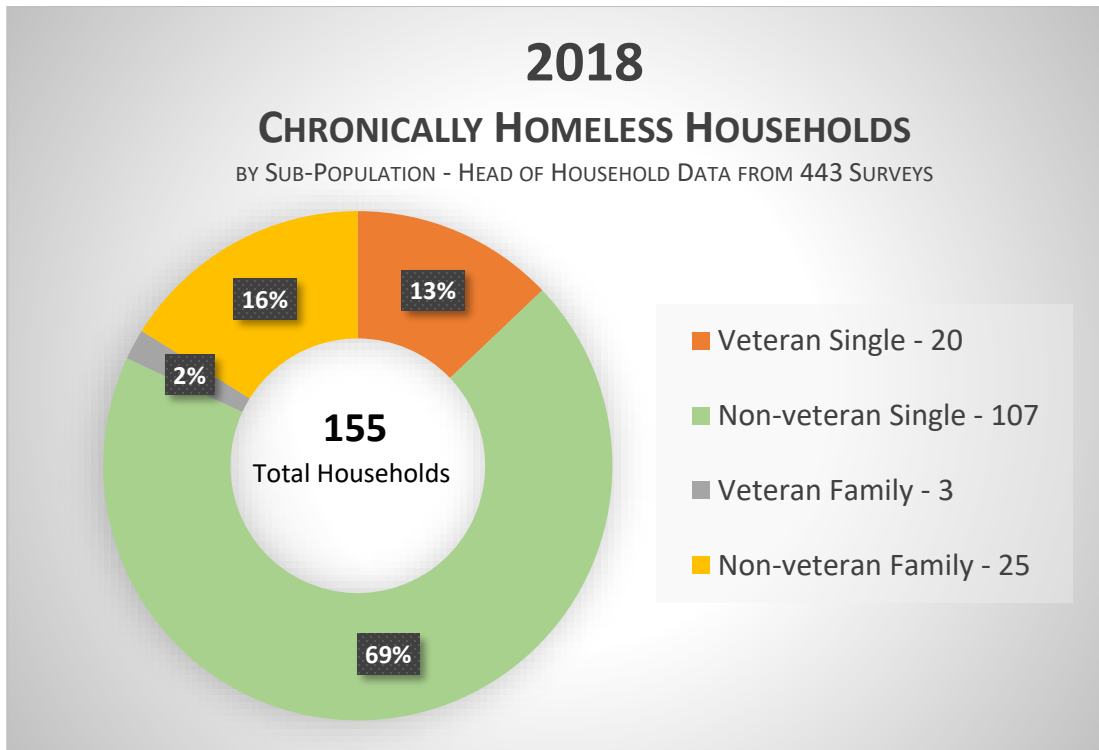- At least 4 times in past 3 years - 13

4

Survey participants whose circumstances would classify them as chronically homeless decreased both in total reported and percentage of the population surveyed. Despite the total number of survey participants increasing from the previous year, the number of chronically homeless neighbors decreased by 31 individuals. It is important to note that this calculation of chronically homeless individuals includes all members of a household as reported in a participant's survey responses. The final report of chronically homeless neighbors reported by the WA Department of Commerce was less by a noteworthy amount and is called out in the footnote as well as charted on page 19.
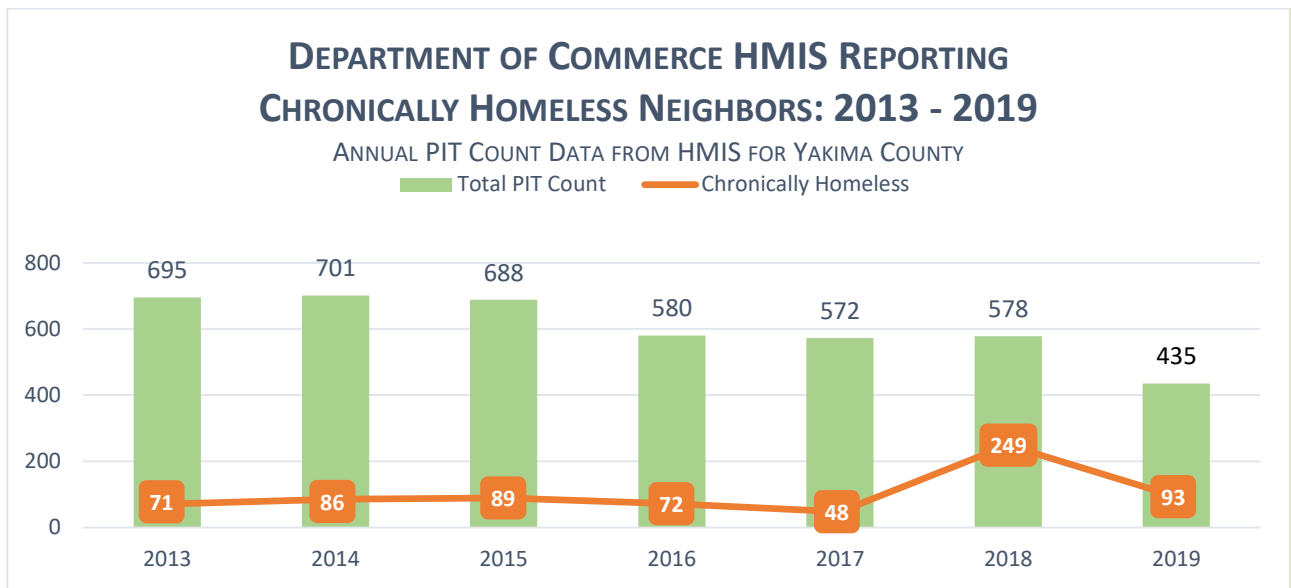
2018

CHRONICALLY HOMELESS NEIGHBORS

443 SURVEYS TOTALING 646 INDIVIDUALS

9%

203
individuals reported
from survey data
31% of total

91%

- Homeless for > 1 year - 184
- At least 4 times in past 3 years - 19

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[4] The Department of Commerce reported 93 total individuals classified as chronically homeless the night of the 2019 PIT Count based on HMIS data. This would indicate that approximately 21% of all homeless neighbors included in the night of the PIT Count are chronically homeless based on HMIS data (93/435). This is consistent with the percentage reported from survey responses despite total numbers being different.

2019

CHRONICALLY HOMELESS HOUSEHOLDS

BY SUB-POPULATION - HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD DATA FROM 539 SURVEYS

144 Total Households

- Veteran Single - 18
- Non-veteran Single - 105
- Veteran Family - 1
- Non-veteran Family - 18

12% · 14% · 1% · 73%

Despite the reduction in total chronically homeless individuals based on survey data, the overall composition of those experiencing chronic homelessness seems to have remained consistent based on the four distinct household make-ups analyzed the past 2 years.

2018

CHRONICALLY HOMELESS HOUSEHOLDS

BY SUB-POPULATION - HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD DATA FROM 443 SURVEYS

155 Total Households

- Veteran Single - 20
- Non-veteran Single - 107
- Veteran Family - 3
- Non-veteran Family - 25

13% · 16% · 2% · 69%

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE HMIS REPORTING
CHRONICALLY HOMELESS NEIGHBORS: 2013 - 2019
ANNUAL PIT COUNT DATA FROM HMIS FOR YAKIMA COUNTY

The Department of Commerce is unsure of why there was such a significant spike in the number of chronically homeless individuals reported in 2018 in HMIS. 2019 HMIS data shows a reduction from 2018, but still approximately 27% higher than the average reported between 2013 – 2017. However, it is worth noting that 2019 HMIS data reports no chronically homeless families in 2019 despite survey responses indicating there were 19 families surveyed.

2019 PIT Count: Top Reasons Cited as Cause of Homelessness
(Participants could select more than one reason)

	Number of Responses
1. Economic	178
2. Job Loss	177
3. Alcohol / Substance Use	174
4. Family Crisis	171
5. Lost Temporary Living Situation	134
6. Kicked Out / Left Home	108
7. Eviction	102
8. Domestic Violence	99
9. Physical / Mental Disability	97
10. Mental Illness	97
11. Illness / Health Related	92
12. Released from Jail	77
13. Personal Choice	68
14. Lacking Job Skills	63
15. Medical Costs	34
16. Lack of Childcare	15
17. Language Barrier	13
18. Aged out of Foster Care	12

The following chart provides a visual look at the same data of the breakdown of all reasons identified as the causes of homelessness by survey participants.
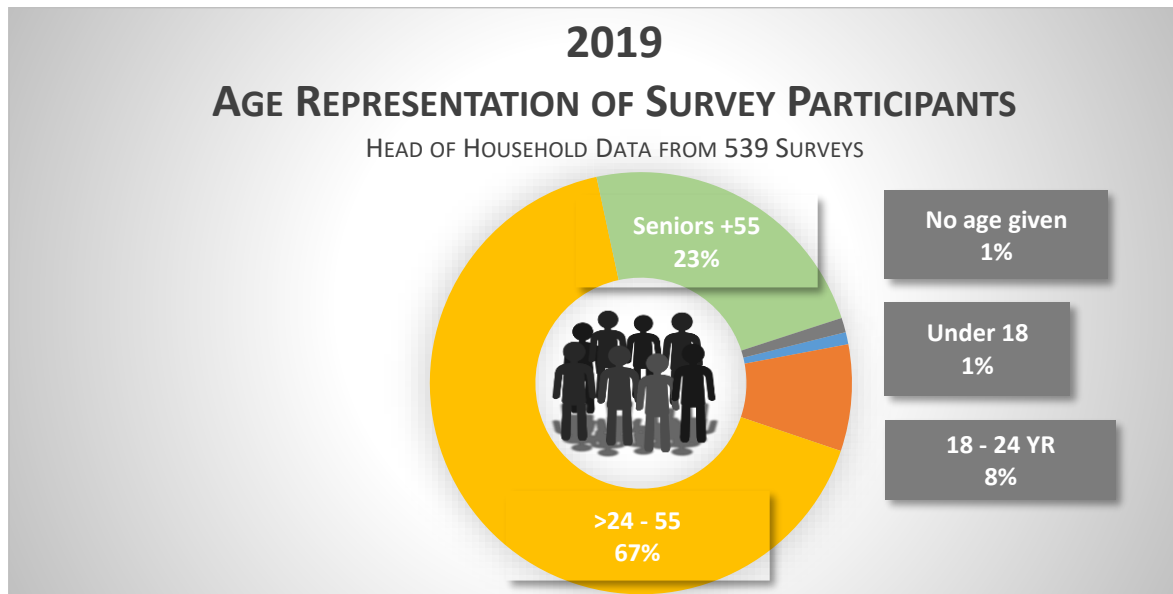
2019 PIT COUNT: TOP REASONS CITED AS CAUSE OF HOMELESSNESS
(PARTICIPANTS COULD SELECT MORE THAN ONE REASON)

Reason	Count
Economic	178
Job Loss	177
Alcohol / Substance Use	174
Family Crisis	171
Lost Temporary Living Situation	134
Kicked Out / Left Home	108
Eviction	102
Domestic Violence	99
Mental Illness	97
Physical / Mental Disability	97
Illness / Health Related	92
Relased from Jail	77
Personal Choice	68
Lacking Job Skills	63
Medical Costs	34
Lack of Childcare	15
Language Barrier	13
Aged out of Foster Care	12

TRENDS OF THE TOP REASONS CITED FOR BECOMING HOMELESS 2015 - 2019

Legend: Alcohol / Substance Use — Economic — Job Loss — Family Crisis

(line chart spanning years 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019)

5

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[5] Data collected from Yakima County prior year census reports. No data available for 2017 PIT Count.
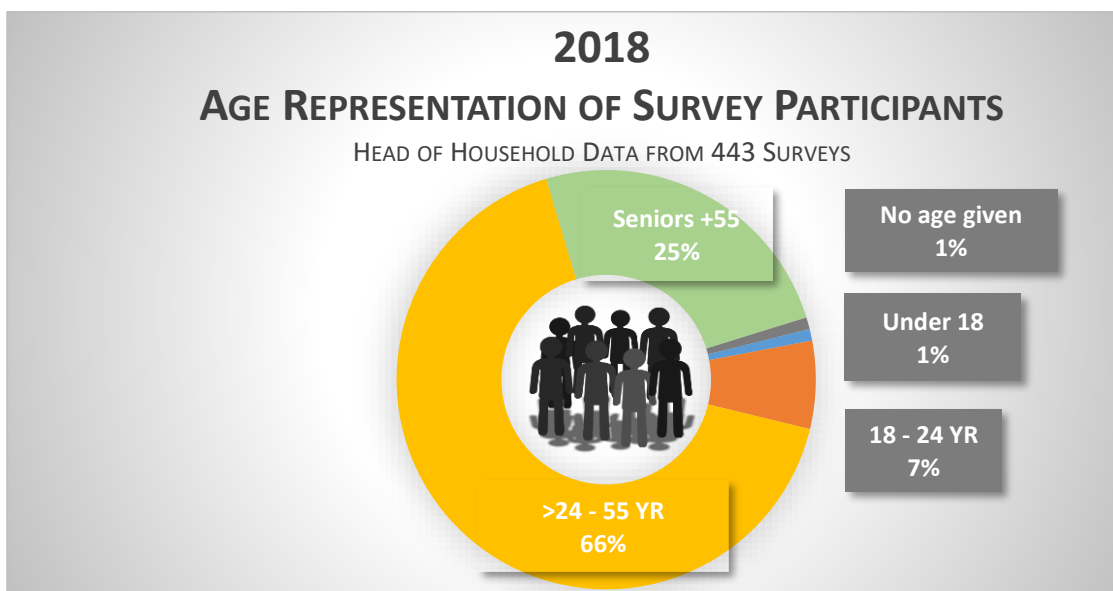
The graph above shows the ranking of the top reasons cited for becoming homeless each year since the 2015 PIT Count. A ranking of 1 is the most cited reason for that year. There are certainly a number of variables affecting the data validity, nonetheless, this trend analysis provides an interesting look at the leading causes of homelessness in Yakima County over the past four years. Since 2015, "Alcohol/Substance Use", "Economic", "Job Loss", and "Family Crisis" continue to be the 4 most cited reasons for the occurrence of homelessness in Yakima County.

2019 PIT Count: Age Specific Analysis

The following section provides a deeper look at the breakdown of certain classifications and challenges by specific age ranges.

2019

AGE REPRESENTATION OF SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD DATA FROM 539 SURVEYS

Seniors +55 23%
No age given 1%
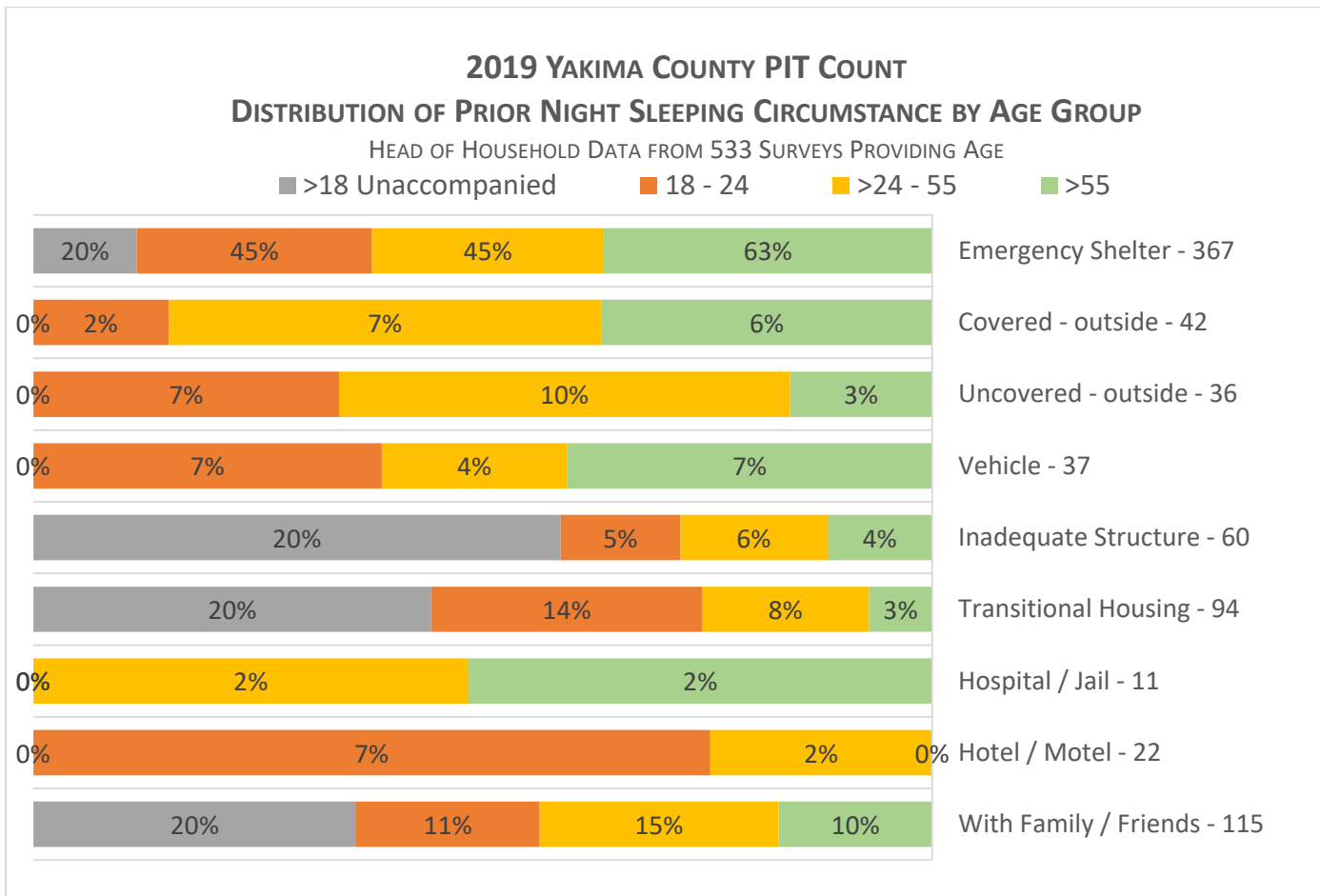Under 18 1%
18 - 24 YR 8%
>24 - 55 67%

The distribution of age ranges for both the 2018 and 2019 PIT Counts are nearly identical. This is despite adding new service agencies and incorporating the Yakama Nation into this year's census effort.
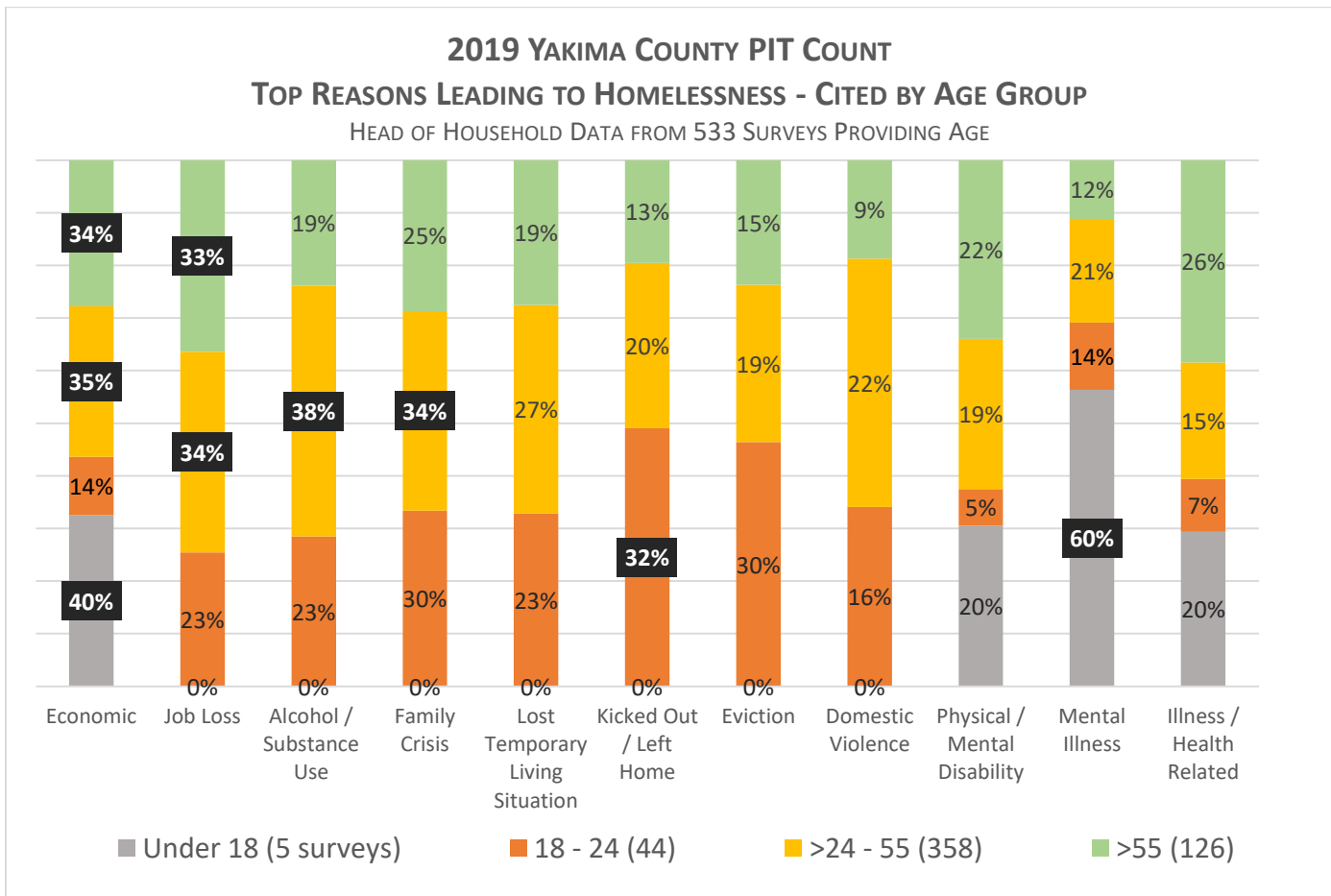

2018

AGE REPRESENTATION OF SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD DATA FROM 443 SURVEYS

Seniors +55 25%
No age given 1%
Under 18 1%
18 - 24 YR 7%
>24 - 55 YR 66%

2019 YAKIMA COUNTY PIT COUNT

% REPORTING AT LEAST 1 DISABILITY BY AGE GROUP

HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD DATA FROM 533 SURVEYS PROVIDING AGE

40%
2
Under 18 (5 surveys)

25%
11
18 - 24 (44)

47%
167
>24 - 55 (358)

67%
84
>55 (126)

2019 YAKIMA COUNTY PIT COUNT

% CLASSIFIED AS CHRONICALLY HOMELESS BY AGE GROUP

HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD DATA FROM 533 SURVEYS PROVIDING AGE

0%
Under 18 (5 surveys)

7%
3
18 - 24 (44)

24%
87
>24 - 55 (358)

43%
54
>55 (126)

These 2 graphs, when viewed together illustrate the likelihood that homeless neighbors who have a disability run an increased chance of becoming chronically homeless as they age. The following table presents this information more clearly:

	18 – 24	>24 – 55	>55
Reported Disability	11	167	84
Classified as Chronically Homeless	3	87	54
% With a Disability Experiencing Chronic Homelessness	27%	52%	64%

2019 YAKIMA COUNTY PIT COUNT
DISTRIBUTION OF PRIOR NIGHT SLEEPING CIRCUMSTANCE BY AGE GROUP
HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD DATA FROM 533 SURVEYS PROVIDING AGE

■ >18 Unaccompanied   ■ 18 - 24   ■ >24 - 55   ■ >55

Circumstance	>18 Unaccompanied	18 - 24	>24 - 55	>55
Emergency Shelter - 367	20%	45%	45%	63%
Covered - outside - 42	0%	2%	7%	6%
Uncovered - outside - 36	0%	7%	10%	3%
Vehicle - 37	0%	7%	4%	7%
Inadequate Structure - 60	20%	5%	6%	4%
Transitional Housing - 94	20%	14%	8%	3%
Hospital / Jail - 11	0%		2%	2%
Hotel / Motel - 22	0%	7%	2%	0%
With Family / Friends - 115	20%	11%	15%	10%

This graph provides a visual of where homeless neighbors found refuge the night prior to the PIT Count classified by specific age ranges. The graph of prior night sleeping circumstance grouped by location (and not age group) can be found on page 8 of this report. A few noteworthy observations from the data:

- Almost 2/3 of individuals over age 55 were staying in an emergency shelter. This was by far the largest concentration of any single age group.
- Transitional Housing, despite being the 3rd most cited prior night circumstance across all surveys only accounted for 3% of the +55 age group.
- Across all age ranges, survey participants staying with friends and family was consistent as a percentage of each age range breakdown.
- Across all age ranges, approximately 1 in 4 individuals spent the prior night outside, in a vehicle, or in an inadequate structure.

2019 YAKIMA COUNTY PIT COUNT
TOP REASONS LEADING TO HOMELESSNESS - CITED BY AGE GROUP
HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD DATA FROM 533 SURVEYS PROVIDING AGE

Under 18 (5 surveys)   18 - 24 (44)   >24 - 55 (358)   >55 (126)

This graph visually illustrates the variety of reasons that survey participants cited as the reason(s) leading to homelessness. It has been organized by age groups to identify potential themes and areas of focus. Any reason cited by at least 1/3 of a specific age group has been highlighted. A few noteworthy observations from the data:

- Economic factors and job loss comprised a significant percentage of the 24 and older population
- For the second year in a row, approximately 1 in 3 survey participants ages 18 – 24 cited being kicked out or leaving home as the primary reason leading to their homelessness
  [2019 – 32% | 2018 – 37%]
- For the second year in a row, 34% of participants ages 25 – 55 cited job loss as the primary reason leading to their homelessness.

2019 PIT Count: Yakama Nation Census Insights

The participation from the Yakama Nation sourced a significant data set for the 2019 PIT Count. Approximately 1 in 4 census forms completed came from the efforts of the Yakama Nation service providers and Cultural Center event volunteers. The following section provides some specific insights into this data set.

2019 PIT Count Key Demographic Data reported from 2019 Surveys and Compared with results from 2018 Surveys

	Yakama Nation	Total Surveyed	% of Total Population
Surveys Collected	148	539	27%
Community Members Included	265	818	32%
Unaccompanied Youth <18	4	5	80%
18 - 24 YR	11	57	19%
Singles +24	130	359	36%
Families with children	30	86	35%
Dependents < 18	77	189	41%
Seniors +55	23	126	18%
Veterans	4	54	7%
Chronic Homeless (total household members)	37	172	22%

2019 YAKAMA NATION PIT COUNT TOTAL
RESULTS FROM 148 SURVEYS TOTALING 265 INDIVIDUALS

167

31 / 19%
74 / 44%
62 / 37%
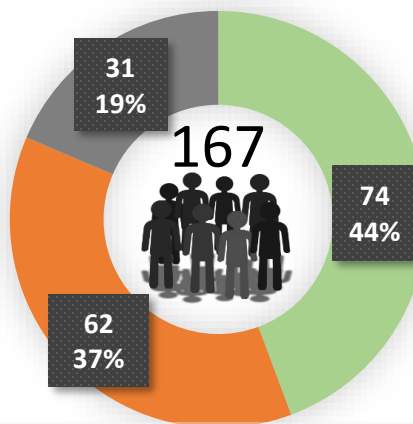
■ Unsheltered   ■ Emergency Shelter   ■ Transitional Housing

[6]

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[6] These numbers have not been audited by the Department of Commerce outside of the larger data set. The totals are direct counts from surveys collected during the PIT Count.

92%

Of surveys received <u>within the Yakama Nation</u> identified race as American Indian

138 out of 149

73%

Of <u>ALL survey respondents</u> across Yakima County and the Yakama Nation who identified race as American Indian were within the Yakama Nation

51%

Of surveys <u>received within the Yakama Nation reported Female as the gender</u>

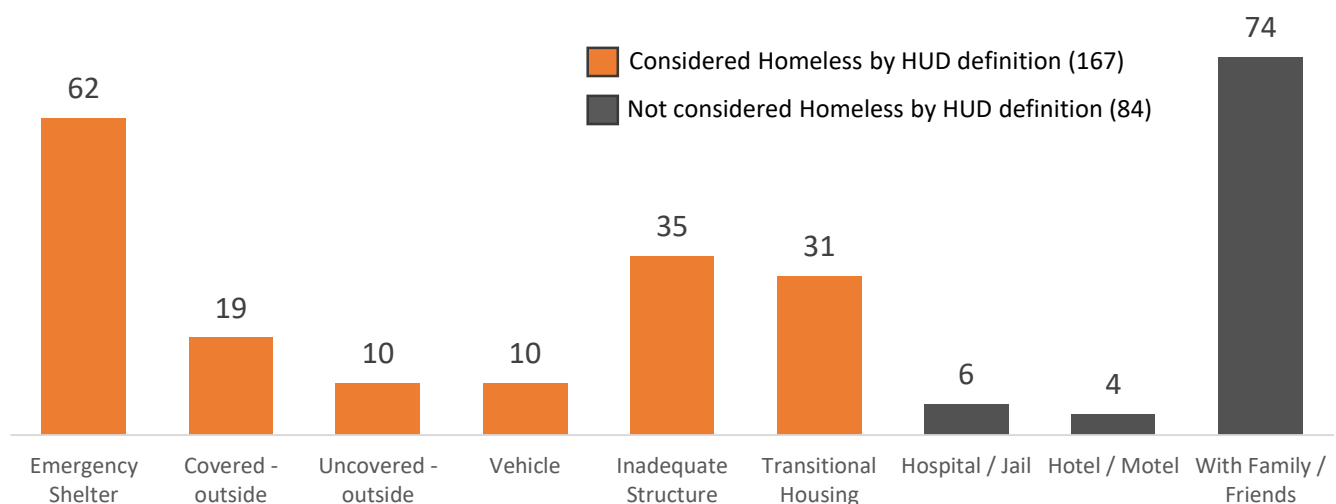Female head of households accounted for only 42% of the total surveys received across Yakima County and the Yakama Nation

41%

Of <u>all dependents</u> included in surveys came from <u>within the Yakama Nation</u>

While total surveys received from within the Yakama Nation only accounted for 27% of the total

2019 YAKAMA NATION PIT COUNT SURVEY DATA

WHERE HOMELESS NEIGHBORS SLEPT THE NIGHT PRIOR TO THE COUNT

TOTALS INCLUDE HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD, PARTNER/SPOUSE AND DEPENDANTS DATA FROM 148 SURVEYS

Considered Homeless by HUD definition (167)

Not considered Homeless by HUD definition (84)

Category	Value
Emergency Shelter	62
Covered - outside	19
Uncovered - outside	10
Vehicle	10
Inadequate Structure	35
Transitional Housing	31
Hospital / Jail	6
Hotel / Motel	4
With Family / Friends	74

2019 YAKAMA NATION PIT COUNT
PRIOR NIGHT STAY: YAKAMA NATION RESPONSES RELATIVE TO TOTAL RESPONSES

	Emergency Shelter	Covered - outside	Uncovered - outside	Vehicle	Inadequate Structure	Transitional Housing	Hospital / Jail	Hotel / Motel	With Family / Friends
Total PIT Count	367	42	36	37	60	94	11	22	115
Yakama Nation Responses	17% 62	45% 19	28% 10	27% 10	58% 35	33% 31	55% 6	18% 4	64% 74

■ Yakama Nation Responses   ■ Total PIT Count

This graph provides a visual of where homeless neighbors found refuge the night prior to the PIT Count looking at the responses received from participants within the Yakama Nation relative to the total surveys. There are 4 circumstances highlighted in black where the percentage of responses from the Yakama Nation participants represented a much larger percentage than the survey totals (27% of all surveys received). These may be outliers; however, a second year of data may reveal some trends worth looking into further.

Another interesting observation from the data is that while Emergency Shelter stays the night prior to the count represented 45% of all survey responses, only 17% came from surveys within the Yakama Nation. Emergency shelter stays within the Yakama Nation surveys, accounted for only 23% (62 of the 148) the of the total for this subset of the surveys received.

2019 PIT Count: Top Reasons Cited as Cause of Homelessness
(Participants could select more than one reason)

Responses	Yakama Nation	All Surveys	% of All Surveys
1. Alcohol / Substance Use	**63**	**174**	**36%**
2. Family Crisis	**58**	**171**	**34%**
3. Economic	**54**	**178**	**30%**
4. Job Loss	**49**	**177**	**28%**
5. Lost Temporary Living Situation	41	134	31%
6. Eviction	33	102	32%
7. Kicked Out / Left Home	31	108	29%
8. Lacking Job Skills	26	63	41%
9. Personal Choice	24	68	35%
10. Illness / Health Related	20	92	22%
11. Mental Illness	*17*	*97*	*18%*
12. Released from Jail	16	77	21%
13. Domestic Violence	*14*	*99*	*14%*
14. Physical / Mental Disability	*13*	*97*	*13%*
15. Medical Costs	7	34	21%
16. Lack of Childcare	6	15	40%
17. Language Barrier	2	13	15%
18. Aged out of Foster Care	2	12	17%

Data from the 148 surveys received from within the Yakama Nation show the same top 4 reasons cited for the cause of homelessness. However, this subset of surveys has Alcohol / Substance Use as the #1 reason (#3 in the total data set).

Also worth noting is that instances of domestic violence (14%), mental illness (18%), and physical and mental disabilities (13%)– all higher ranking causes cited in the full dataset – account for much smaller percentage of total responses relative to the size of this subset of data (27% of total responses). On the other hand, lacking in job skills (41%) and childcare (40%) appeared much more frequently as causes cited relative to the percentage of the total.

2019 PIT Count: Education, Income, and Housing Search Data

For the 2019 PIT Count, additional questions regarding education, income, and housing search efforts were asked to survey participants to glean further insights from the broad macro-economic factors cited as the leading causes of homelessness over the past several years. The following graphics illustrate profiles of homeless neighbors who are seemingly "locked-out" of access to stable housing due to income levels and lack of employment. This sample size reinforces the notion that support services that can assist those who are working towards stability can be the difference between success and failure.

2019 YAKIMA COUNTY PIT COUNT
EDUCATION LEVELS REPORTED BY HOMELESS NEIGHBORS
HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD DATA FROM 509 SURVEY RESPONSES

- Some College 14%
- Associates 2%
- Bachelors 3%
- Masters 1%
- Below HS 7%
- HS Diploma / GED 38%
- Some High School 35%
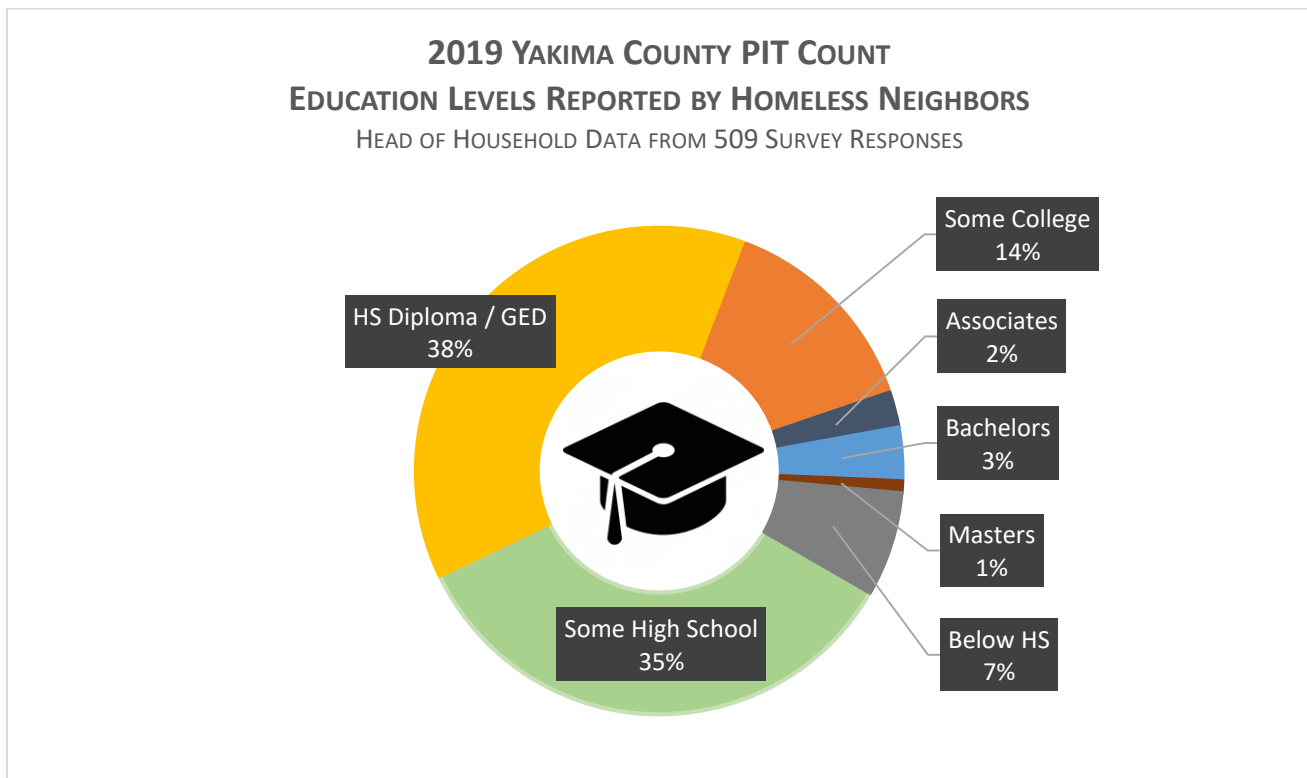
2019 PIT Count: Income Sources Identified by Households Experiencing Homelessness

(Participants could select more than one source)

Income Source	Responses	% of Total Households
Food Stamps	288	53%
Per Capita Payments	134	25%
Medicare/Medicaid	133	25%
SSI/SSDI	78	14%
Social Security	71	13%
None	69	13%
TANF	36	7%
Part-time Employment	26	5%
Full-time Employment	20	4%

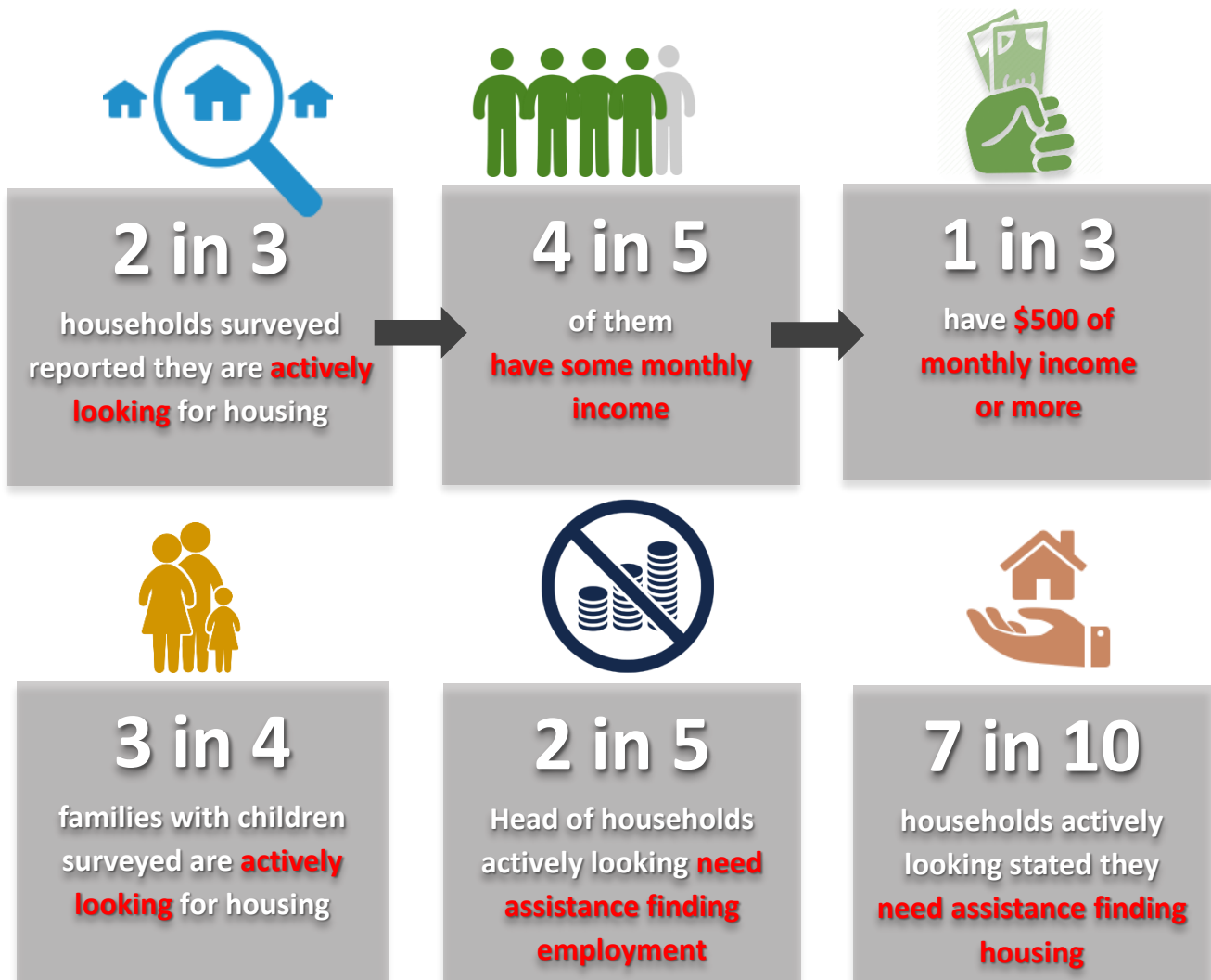|		
Panhandling	20	4%
VA Benefits	11	2%
Under the Table	11	2%
Temporary Disability	10	2%
Relative/Friends	8	1%
Child Support	7	1%
Unemployment	5	1%
Farm/Migrant/Agriculture	2	0.003%
L&I / Workers Comp	1	0.002%

Of the 539 surveys received, 75% (404) indicated that they had some household income. This is consistent with 2018 PIT data for households with income (77% reported some income). Food stamps represent the largest source of monthly household income, and in 20% of the circumstances, food stamps were the only source of income reported.

With the participation of the Yakama Nation in the 2019 census, there was a significant increase in the number of per capita payments reported by survey participants (up from 13% of surveys received in 2018). The following chart illustrates the income levels identified by survey participants for the 2019 PIT Count.

2019 YAKIMA COUNTY PIT COUNT
MONTHLY INCOME REPORTED BY HOMELESS NEIGHBORS
HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD DATA FROM 404 SURVEY RESPONSES

$100 - $500 39%
<$100 18%
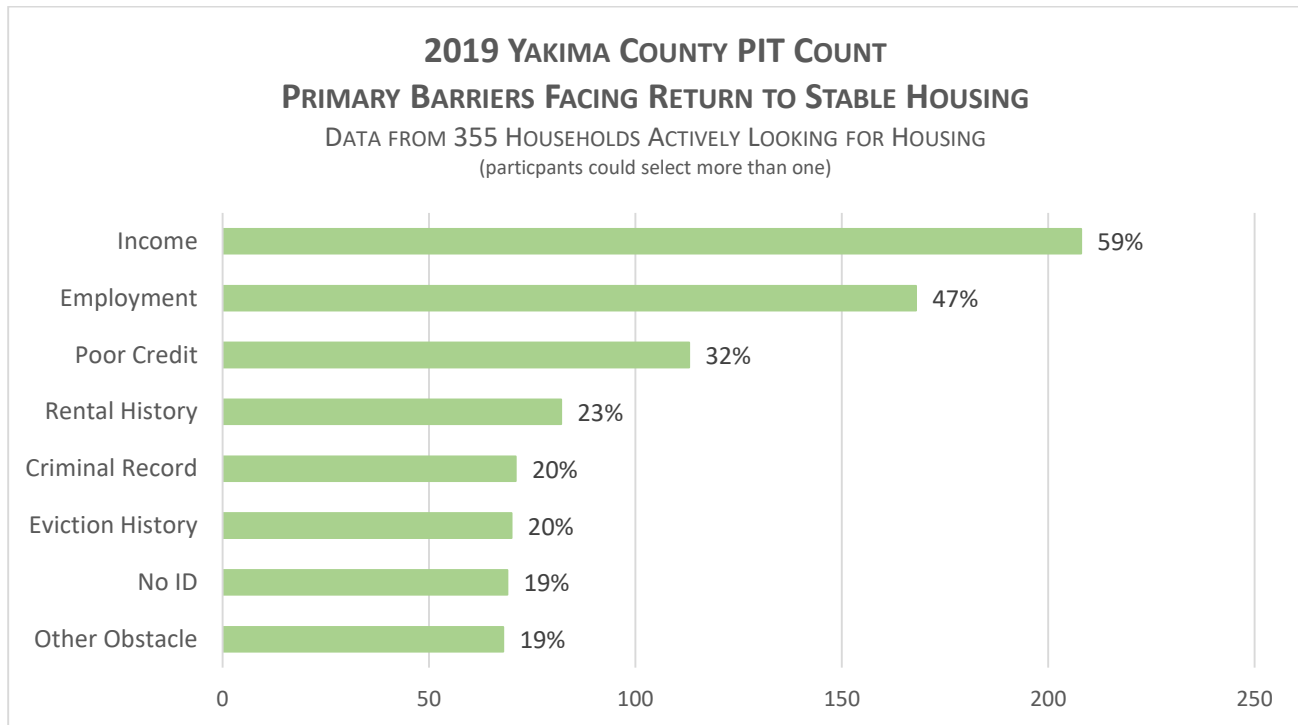>$1500 3%
$1000 - $1500 7%
$500 - $1000 33%
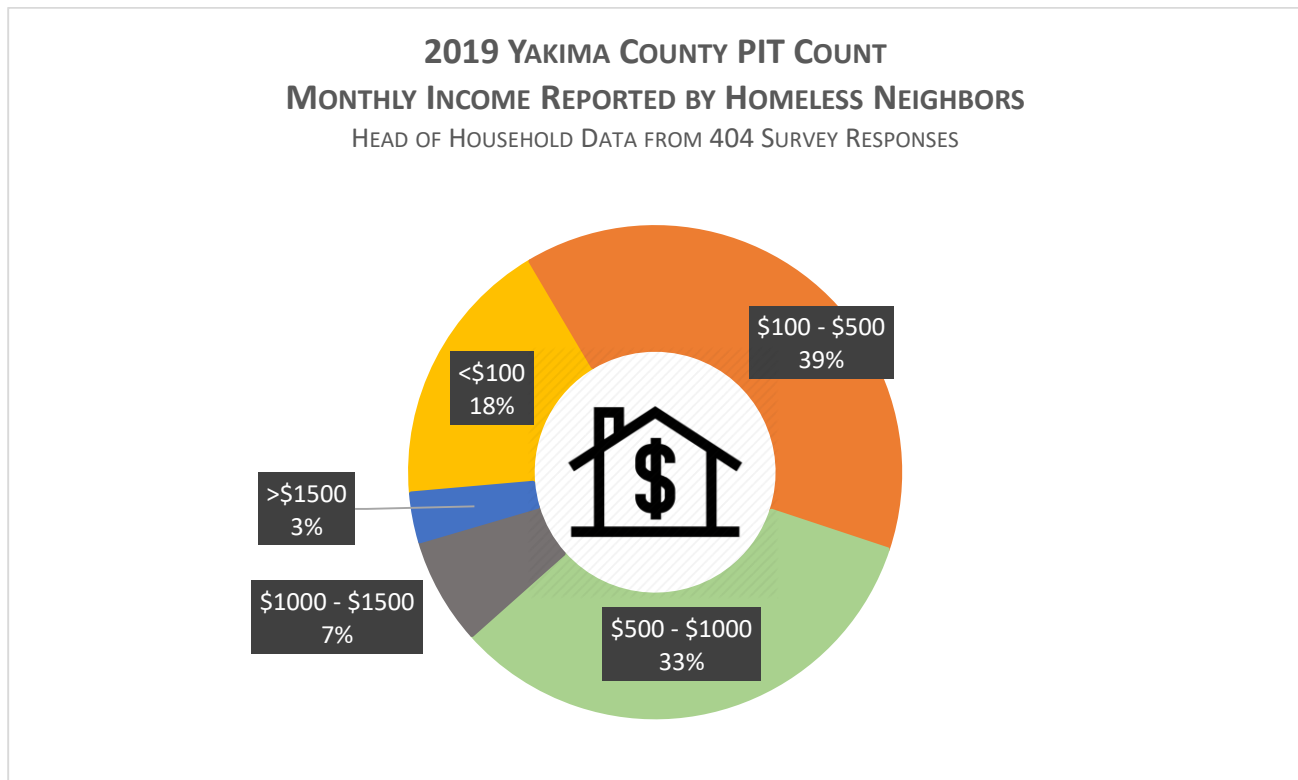
Household income levels for those experiencing homelessness are insufficient to be able to find housing stability without rental subsidies. 9 out of 10 households surveyed reported monthly income below $1000 making it all but impossible to find housing at current rent levels. Despite this reality, the majority

of households experiencing homelessness are actively looking for housing, with almost 60% of those reporting income actively looking for housing for 6 months or more.

2 in 3

households surveyed reported they are **actively looking** for housing

4 in 5

of them **have some monthly income**

1 in 3

have **$500 of monthly income or more**

3 in 4

families with children surveyed are **actively looking** for housing

2 in 5

Head of households actively looking **need assistance finding employment**

7 in 10

households actively looking stated they **need assistance finding housing**

There is strong evidence to suggest that the majority of individuals experiencing homelessness desire to change their circumstance, but the disparity between market rate and affordable housing is perhaps the greatest influencer in the ability for homeless neighbors to return to stable housing in Yakima County. These survey findings and additional analysis may reveal further insights to inform the prevailing perception of the profile of homeless individuals and families in the Yakima County community and the actual support they need to maintain or return to housing stability.

Adding another level of complexity to those searching for housing are the extra barriers that many homeless neighbors face. The following chart illustrates some of the primary challenges facing homeless neighbors as they look to establish housing stability.

2019 YAKIMA COUNTY PIT COUNT

PRIMARY BARRIERS FACING RETURN TO STABLE HOUSING

DATA FROM 355 HOUSEHOLDS ACTIVELY LOOKING FOR HOUSING
(particpants could select more than one)

Barrier	Value
Income	59%
Employment	47%
Poor Credit	32%
Rental History	23%
Criminal Record	20%
Eviction History	20%
No ID	19%
Other Obstacle	19%

Support Services Needed Today

Stable housing is the ultimate goal for many households experiencing homelessness. However, as has been illustrated, there are significant challenges facing homeless neighbors looking to find housing. There are other support services that can be of great benefit to those experiencing homelessness while they work to find stability. For the second year in a row survey participants were asked to identify services that would be the most useful to them today.

Service	Responses	% of Total
Help Finding Housing	275	51%
Laundry	254	47%
Shower	247	46%
Safe Storage	230	43%
Restroom	212	39%
Day Center	194	36%
Dental	165	31%
Help Finding Work	164	30%
Medical	143	27%
Counselor	106	20%
Utility Assistance	83	15%
Pet Care	63	12%
Home Weatherization	43	8%
Landlord Disputes	33	6%
Transportation	17	3%

Factors Affecting the 2019 PIT Count

As with all data collection, there are challenges regarding the validity of the data collection and reporting process. For the 2019 PIT count, gathering survey participant signatures significantly decreased the likelihood of data duplication on reported information. However, as has been the struggle in previous years, the following variables must be acknowledged as it relates to data integrity:

1. *Not all agencies serving homeless community members are utilizing HMIS for reporting.* The Washington State Department of Commerce requires agencies and organizations that are receiving state and federal funds, to utilize the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) to support data collection efforts about homeless individuals and families that are staying in emergency shelters and transitional housing. Organizations that do not receive federal funds are not required to report into HMIS and therefore individuals that are served by these entities may not be included in the total PIT Count numbers unless they participated in the survey.

2. *Known sections of homeless neighbors not surveyed.* Excluding entering into camps (even those that are known) for safety reasons decreases the population surveyed and reduces the number of homeless neighbors included on the day of the PIT count. The 2019 PIT Count efforts accessed volunteer assistance from formerly homeless individuals and seasoned service providers. These census facilitators had knowledge of areas to go and trust established to connect with homeless neighbors that may have been reluctant to participate or even be identified. Even still, the choice was made to not visit known encampments for the 2019 PIT Count.

3. *Rural Communities lacking service agencies with which to partner.* The iCount Yakima County facilitators worked to partner with as many agencies as were willing across the county. Some communities had only 1 agency that served homeless neighbors, while others did not have any agency representation. Despite the collaboration from service providers, in most cases, survey volunteers were restricted to working within the business hours on the day of the count. This means that services may not be offered on the same day as the PIT Count and therefore not be a viable location. Additionally, in smaller communities, service hubs are staffed by volunteers, and the ability to rely on these dedicated individuals as consistent partners for the census efforts is limited. Such was the case with the Underground in Sunnyside. These are known factors that must be acknowledged when facilitating the PIT Count. It is worth noting that more partners and locations were established for the 2019 PIT Count than the year prior, and the iCount Yakima County team is committed to continuing to build partnerships that provide the greatest reach throughout the county to facilitate the one-day count.

4. *HUD classification of "Inadequate Structure" as homeless not necessarily aligning with people's own perception of their circumstance.* HUD classifies those living in structures without any of the following: heat, running water, the ability to cook hot food, the ability to bathe, as homeless. There is a high likelihood that individuals in these circumstances do not consider themselves to be homeless and therefore are not seeking services nor participating in PIT count activities. There were some survey participants who identified their own home as an inadequate structure, but a very small number relative to the likely potential of qualified dwellings.

5. *School district homeless youth reports differ from qualified HUD PIT count numbers.* School districts report the number of students living in unstable housing circumstances through the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). However, a broader definition of

"homeless" is used including students who are living "doubled up" and "couch surfing." While the PIT Count may connect with some of these individuals and their families, the number reported through OSPI has historically been much larger than the PIT counts. According to the report released by OSPI for the 2018 school year, *school districts in Yakima County reported approximately 2600 students PK – 12 as homeless*. Of this number, approximately 8% (212 students) reported living in an emergency shelter or unsheltered and would therefore qualify within the HUD definition of homeless. The number of homeless students enrolled in Yakima County school districts in 2019 has not been reported yet.

Homeless Student Demographic Counts, by district

2017-18 school year

"N<10" refers to data that has been suppressed because the total is fewer than 10 students.

School Year	District Name	District Enrollment (P-12 total)	# of Identified Homeless	% of District Identified as Homeless
2018	East Valley School District (Yakima)	3529	91	2.6%
2018	Grandview School District	4110	240	5.8%
2018	Granger School District	1671	33	2.0%
2018	Highland School District	1285	73	5.7%
2018	Mabton School District	999	39	3.9%
2018	Mount Adams School District	1059	125	11.8%
2018	Naches Valley School District	1484	18	1.2%
2018	Selah School District	4270	38	0.9%
2018	Sunnyside School District	7408	438	5.9%
2018	Toppenish School District	5558	254	4.6%
2018	Union Gap School District	713	n<10	n<10
2018	Wapato School District	3759	520	13.8%
2018	West Valley School District (Yakima)	5989	72	1.2%
2018	Yakima School District	18760	621	3.3%
2018	Zillah School District	1406	37	2.6%

Using Sunnyside as an example, the table above indicates that there are 438 students considered to be homeless by OSPI classification. In contrast, the 2019 PIT Count connected with only 3 households in the South County region including Sunnyside. This is just one example of the known discrepancy in the annual PIT Count results. This does not mean that efforts to connect are not beneficial. The value of the PIT Count is to make a human connection with neighbors who are struggling and who are willing to provide some insight into their circumstance in order to gather data to identify potential trends, services gaps, and homeless service system improvements.

Summary and Recommendations

In reviewing the information that was collected, the Yakima County 2019 PIT Count follows the historical trends for much of the demographic data reported in prior year PIT counts. The general consistency of data collected over the past several years may be showing the Yakima County community that the profile of homeless neighbors is perhaps becoming less speculative. This allows the County and service providers to begin to look at the efficiency and effectiveness of the homeless service system in Yakima County as it relates to serving specific homeless subpopulations. Continued efforts are underway to evolve the homeless service system through refinement of the Coordinated Entry process and other initiatives as outlined in the County's revised 5 year plan to address homelessness and affordable housing.
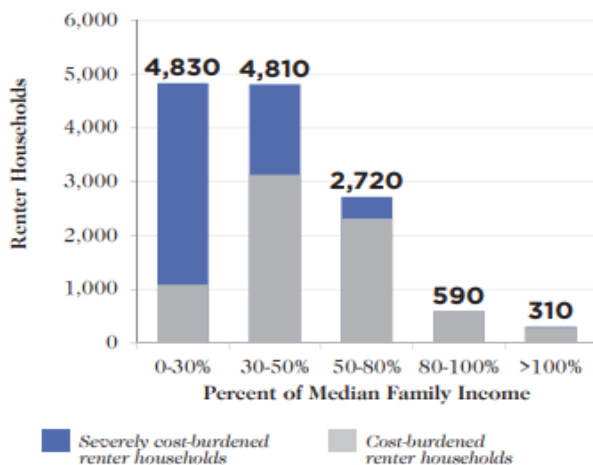
The trends in the data about causes cited for homelessness is one area that may benefit from being further explored. Within the top reasons continually cited, those of "Economic," "Family Crisis," and "Job Loss" present opportunities to formulate hypothesis and target more specific data collection. For example: 1) insights into more exact "economic" reasons that make this category a top cited reason, 2) data regarding time between the moment of job loss or family crisis and seeking homeless service assistance, 3) identifying particular reasons that may benefit from more targeted prevention. Furthermore, breaking these reasons down by age provides additional insight into causes and circumstances that may have a greater impact on certain age groups.

Of course the single greatest "reason" affecting community members at risk of or currently experiencing homelessness continues to be the lack of affordable housing in Yakima County. The two charts below provide context for the large number of households in Yakima County (approximately 26,000) that are classified as cost-burdened or severely cost-burdened[7]. This means that these households pay more than 30% or 50% respectively of gross wages towards housing and are considered "unstably housed." About 33% of all households in Yakima County are unstably housed and at risk of becoming homeless. Affordable housing inventory for households making 50% or less of the median family income is about 40% of what is needed. This means that 6 out of 10 low-to-no income households cannot find an affordable home in Yakima County based on their income levels.

2015 Washington State Housing Needs Assessment: Yakima County

Cost Burden

Cost-Burdened *Renter* Households

Percent of Median Family Income	Households
0-30%	4,830
30-50%	4,810
50-80%	2,720
80-100%	590
>100%	310

Legend: Severely cost-burdened renter households / Cost-burdened renter households

Cost-Burdened *Homeowner* Households

Percent of Median Family Income	Households
0-30%	2,045
30-50%	3,065
50-80%	3,390
80-100%	1,610
>100%	2,845

Legend: Severely cost-burdened homeowner households / Cost-burdened homeowner households

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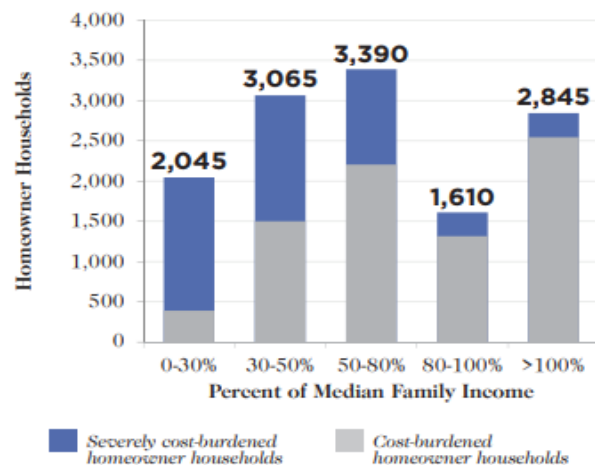
[7] Data presented is from a 2015 Affordable Housing Needs Assessment conducted by the WA Department of Commerce

This profile of struggling households fundamentally redefines the perception of the circumstances facing people at risk of becoming homeless, and supports the PIT Count trends of "Economic" and "Job Loss" as consistent reasons leading to homelessness. At this level of need for affordable housing, government resources available to the homeless and affordable housing service system are insufficient. Any viable strategy to address homeless and affordable housing in Yakima County will need to explore and consider solutions involving private investment and public-private partnerships in addition to funding provided by federal, state, and local governments.

The results of the 2019 PIT Count continue to illustrate the pursuit of more coordinated efforts throughout the homeless service system to define both demographic data for trend analysis as well as system performance metrics that look at the effectiveness of services and prioritization of limited funding.