



SAN DIEGO
Regional Task Force
on Homelessness

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

2023 Point-in-Time Count Results Released

Data collected provides a sobering snapshot of homelessness in San Diego County along with valuable insights into who is living on our streets and why.

SAN DIEGO (June 8th, 2023)—The Regional Task Force on Homelessness (RTFH) today released the topline results from the 2023 WeAllCount Point-in-Time Count, a one-night snapshot of the minimum number of San Diegans experiencing homelessness. The count was conducted across San Diego County, with more than 1,600 volunteers spending an early January morning helping RTFH complete this federally required task.

Overall, the 2023 Point-in-Time Count is sobering, finding no less than 10,264 individuals experiencing homelessness across our region. This number includes 5,171 unsheltered San Diegans with 5,093 individuals in shelters and transitional housing. As always, it's critical to remember this is a minimum number. The challenge of finding every unsheltered person in a car, encampment, or under a bridge, is impossible. This year, however, we did see an important addition to the area the Point-in-Time Count covers. For the first time ever, under an agreement with the California Department of Transportation, we reached people experiencing homelessness in encampments on Caltrans property. The ability to conduct a robust count on these sites for the first time led to an additional 661 people being counted this year.

With these new areas added to the Point-in-Time Count, the region saw a total increase of 22 percent in the number of people experiencing homelessness this year compared to 2022.

Without those additional CalTrans sites added to the count, the region saw a 14 percent increase compared to the same areas covered last year.

“These results show what’s been clear from our monthly reporting and from what we see on the streets – the region’s homeless system and providers simply cannot keep pace with the ever-increasing flow of people across the county falling into homelessness for a variety of reasons,” RTFH CEO Tamera Kohler said. **“While there are some bright spots, more clearly needs to be done if we want to see different results.”**

Of those surveyed, 80 percent said they began experiencing homelessness in San Diego County.

“What you’re seeing is a system that is stressed and overloaded,” RTFH Board Chair Ray Ellis said. **“Our monthly data reporting shows that from March 2022 through February 2023, more than 11,000 people experiencing homelessness exited the system and moved into a home or apartment, an amazing achievement. However, we’re still seeing a worrying jump in people experiencing homelessness over that same time period. This should be a clarion call to invest in what we know works. We need a lot more housing, a lot more shelter beds, and additional funding for outreach and services.”**

There are some small signs of hope found within the Point-in-Time Count results. Families experiencing unsheltered homelessness, for example, decreased by 25 percent. Additionally, there was a larger increase in the sheltered population of transitional-aged youth (18 to 24) than the unsheltered population, showing the expansion of shelter opportunities for those young people has brought more of them indoors. Also important is that the percentages of people experiencing sheltered and unsheltered homelessness remain roughly the same as in 2022, meaning that added shelter capacity - especially in the City of San Diego - is helping to provide more people with a safe place.

In addition to the information in this release, you can find regional and city-specific Point-in-Time information for 2023 on our [website](#).

“These numbers are sobering but not surprising,” RTFH CoC Board Chair Sean Spear said. **“This is the reason implementing our Regional Plan is so vital in turning these numbers around. I look forward to our board investing our time and resources on implementing that plan this year, which aims to increase both shelter and permanent housing placements.”**

While the Point-in-Time Count is an important data point, the surveying and engagement of people on the morning of the count give us insights and understanding beyond the numbers. That engagement showed concerning increases for two vulnerable populations. This year we found 29 percent of people living on our streets are women. Additionally, people 55 or older now make up 29 percent of our unsheltered population, with 46 percent of them experiencing homelessness for the first time.

This annual count does not represent the totality of the challenges, which is why the RTFH works year-round to collect actionable statistics to keep the public informed. RTFH's monthly reports show for every 10 San Diegans who are housed, 13 San Diegans experience homelessness for the first time. Those reports also show our region has not seen a month since March 2022 where more San Diegans have been housed compared to those experiencing homelessness the first time. Finally, it's important to note that our region's homeless response system interacted with more than 41,000 people in San Diego County from October 2021 to September 2022, compared to 38,000 the previous year.

"All of these numbers point to the increasing crisis we see play out every day on our streets," RTFH's Kohler said. "It's why we need to invest in what we know works: more homes affordable to every income level, more shelter beds, and more resources to keep people in their homes before they end up experiencing homelessness in every community in the county. Without a level of investment that matches the severity of this crisis, we will not achieve our goal of ensuring homelessness is a brief and rare occurrence rather than a permanent situation for thousands of San Diegans. The crisis we face was created over decades – years of overly restrictive housing policies, limited funding for homelessness, and more – so it's not going to be solved overnight. We can and must do better to meet this daunting challenge."

The Regional Task Force on Homelessness (RTFH) has evolved from an initial Mayor's Task Force nearly 40 years ago to the robust organization that it is today with an integrated array of stakeholders committed to preventing and alleviating homelessness in San Diego. We provide essential data and insights on the issue of homelessness, informing policy and driving system design, performance and solutions.

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