

# 2026

## HOMELESSNESS IN MA-505 COC

THE BRISTOL COUNTY  
CONTINUUM OF CARE



*Point In Time Census and Analytics*



Prepared for the MA-505 CoC by the City of New Bedford  
Office of Housing & Community Development

Joshua Amaral, Director



# Overview

- Executive Summary
- Baseline Information
- Statistical Highlights
- Housing Inventory
- 2026 Take Aways

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*Although this presentation approaches some discussion as to patterns and trending revealed by the 2026 annual data collection, it is not intended to supplant a more robust discussion about performance and response to homelessness.*



# Executive Summary

Following the 2024 merger between the New Bedford Continuum of Care and the former Greater Bristol County/Attleboro/Taunton Coalition to end Homelessness (GBCATCH), the **Point In Time (PIT) Count** and **Housing Inventory Count (HIC)** conducted in January 2026 is the third time data from the entire region has been captured and recorded.

Because each CoC had distinct ways of presenting and understanding its data in the past, data collection a around trending over time varies by metric.



*Of note...*

*NOTE: The Bristol County Continuum of Care (MA-505 or "BCCC") is comprised of all cities and towns within Bristol County with the exception of Fall River which has merged with the Balance of State CoC.*

# Executive Summary

	EMERGENCY SHELTERS	TRANSITIONAL HOUSING	PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING, ETC.	CoC TOTAL
Total Number of Housing Units Available	123	56	826	1,005
Total Number of Beds Available	477	85	2,072	2,634
Overall PIT Count	308	82	2,051	2,441
Utilization Rates	<b>65%</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>93%</b>

*Baseline Information*

# Baseline Information

- Point In Time (PIT) focuses on people
- Housing Inventory Count (HIC) focuses on beds
- Each Continuum of Care (CoC) is required to undertake a PIT Count by the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD). It is a census of those unsheltered and living on the streets and those in emergency shelters and transitional housing. The PIT is a sampling of what homelessness might look like in the MA-505 CoC on any given day.
- Across the country, the PIT is generally undertaken on the last Wednesday of January, consistent with federal guidelines. In the Bristol County CoC (BCCCC) the 2026 count was conducted on Wednesday, January 28th 2026.

# Baseline Information

As is the case each year, the 2026 PIT involved many people who participated in preparing for, conducting the count and gathering information:

## **Throughout New Bedford:**

Steppingstone Street Outreach Team

## **Throughout Dartmouth:**

Matt Dansereau - Council on Aging

## **Throughout the Balance of Bristol County:**

CCBC's Housing Team, Coordinated Entry Team, Peer Recovery Center staff, Community Support Team and BHCP Team  
Dan Joyce, St. Vincent dePaul  
Manet Community Health Center - Cory Nelson  
Pam Tarallo, Emergency Overflow-Attleboro

Our Daily Bread  
City of Taunton Community Services - Laura Branco  
City of Taunton Office of Economic and Community Development  
Attleboro Area Interfaith Collaborative (AAIC)  
Emergency shelter and transitional housing personnel for their respective facilities across the MA-505 CoC

## **...and Volunteers behind the scenes**

who coordinated, collected donations, filled backpackes that were provided to unsheltered folks encountered during the PIT Count.

*Statistical Highlights*

# Statistical Highlights

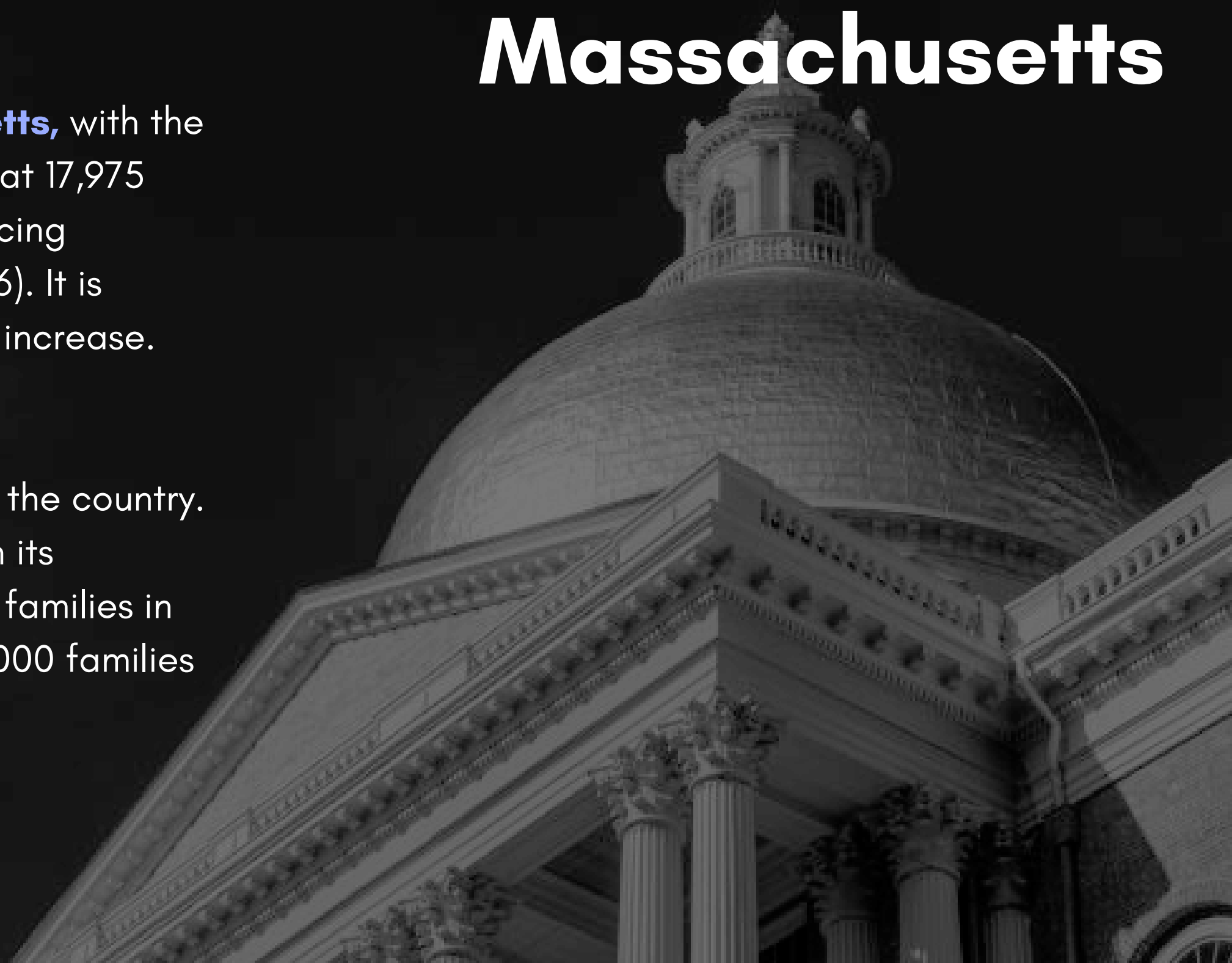
## Overall Counts



# Statistical Highlights

## Massachusetts

- **Overall homelessness persists across Massachusetts**, with the state's annual homeless count in early 2026 estimated at 17,975 individuals (roughly **26 per 10,000 residents**) experiencing homelessness, 15% higher than the previous year (15,286). It is anticipated that final 2026 figures will confirm that an increase.
- Between 2023 and 2024, **family homelessness in Massachusetts** increased by 74%, the highest rate in the country. The state's efforts at reducing the number of families in its emergency shelter system translated to just over 4,000 families in the state's EA system in January 2026 compared with 6,000 families in January of 2025--**a statewide reduction of 33%**.



# Statistical Highlights

## Bristol County CoC

- **The 2026 PIT Count identified 498 people**, both sheltered and unsheltered, throughout the Bristol County CoC compared with 1,130 people counted overall in 2025--a marked decrease of 56%.
- Given the population within the BCCC in 2026, this means that 1 in 990 people (roughly **10 per 10,000 residents**) the CoC's geography were counted as experiencing homelessness, slightly below the state's average.



# Statistical Highlights

## Bristol County CoC

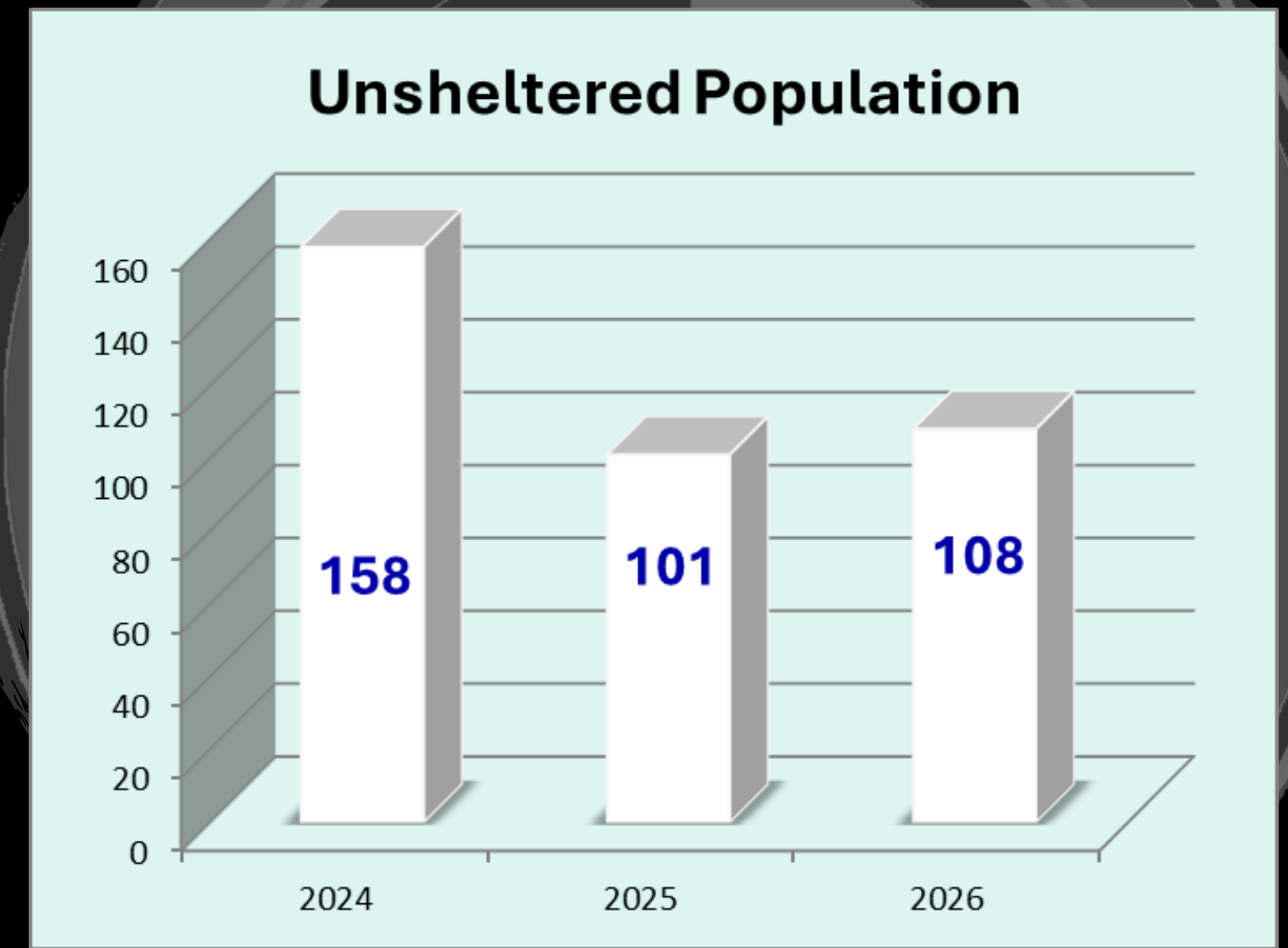
- **The 498 people experiencing homelessness in the Bristol County CoC in 2026** included:
  - 108 unsheltered people
  - 308 people in emergency shelters (140 or 45% of whom were families in state shelters), and
  - 82 people in transitional housing
- Families in shelter as a proportion of the overall count decreased from 2025 to 2026 by 12%.
- The 498 figure does not include the 2,051 people within the Continuum who were living in some form of permanent/supportive housing for those experiencing homelessness.



# Statistical Highlights

## Bristol County CoC

- The **2026 PIT Count number of those who were unsheltered (108)** is just 7% over the 2025 count of 101 but was 32% lower than the 2024 unsheltered count.
- Of note, the cold weather overflow shelters were activated and open the night of the count in both 2025 and 2026 so the slight increase is unrelated to the availability of those accommodations in place for unsheltered during the counts.



# Statistical Highlights

## Bristol County CoC

The number of unsheltered people does not include 80 adults who were staying in the CoC's two overflow shelters the night of the Count. Following federal guidelines, those individuals were counted as being in Emergency Shelter that night.

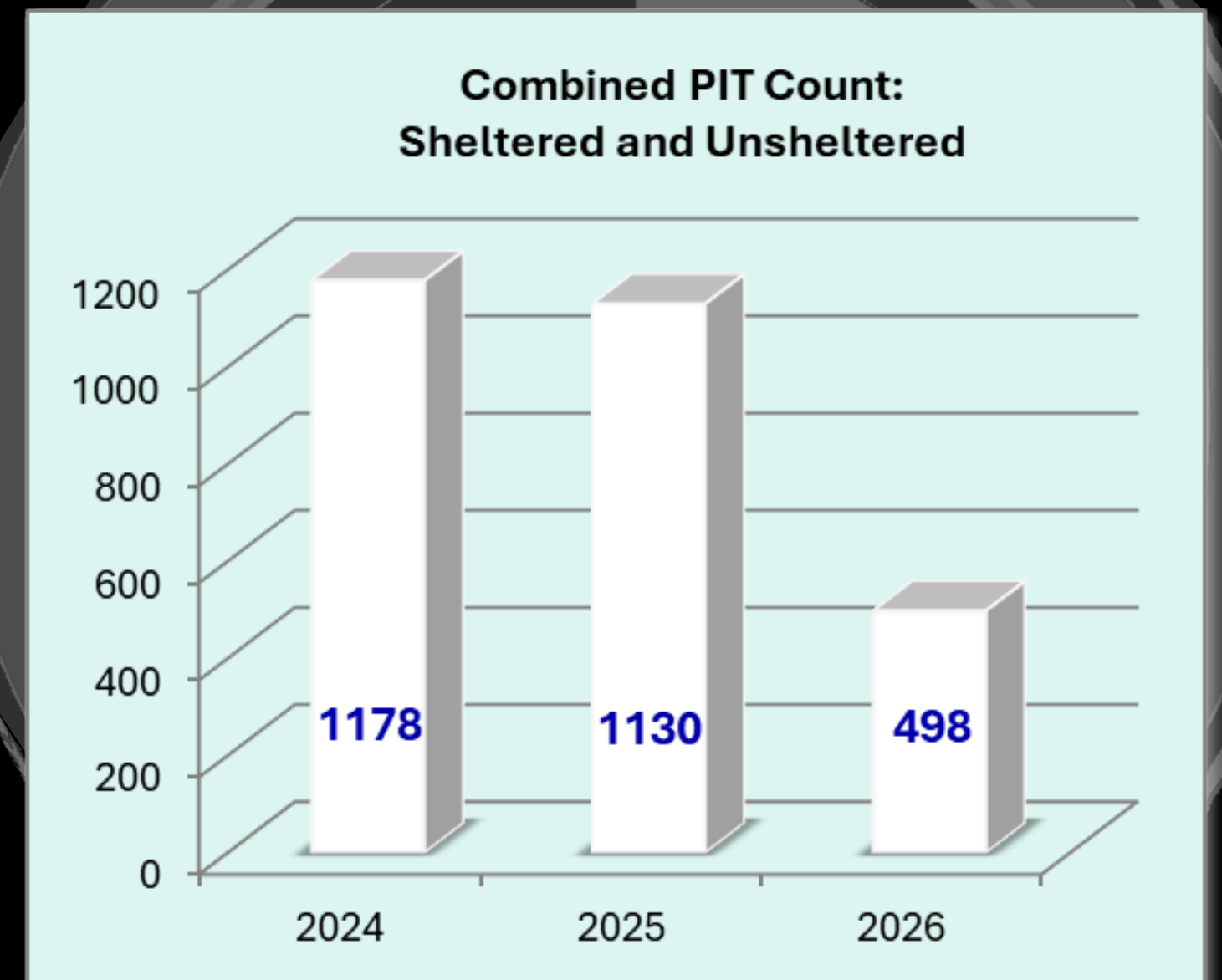
*Of  
note...*

*As was the case in 2025, poor weather on the night of the 2026 Count meant the cold weather overflow shelter was open. Having the overflow shelter open meant that many who are typically unsheltered were unable to stay indoors that night resulting in a lower unsheltered count than may have existed had it been a warmer night.*

# Statistical Highlights

## Bristol County CoC

- The **combined sheltered and unsheltered Point In Time Count** number for 2026 of 498 is significantly less than the 1,130 combined count undertaken in 2025 and 1,178 in 2024.
- The Total PIT Count was 56% lower than the Total Point In Time Count conducted last year.



# Statistical Highlights

## Households



# Statistical Highlights

## Looking at Households in two ways:

### Person-Centered Considerations

- People living in certain types of households
- Whether someone is living in a single (self) household or someone is living in a family household that includes others.
- Whether someone is living in a household that is sheltered or unsheltered.

### Housing-Centered Considerations

- Different household types
- Whether single households or family households accommodated those sheltered or unsheltered



# Statistical Highlights

## Bristol County CoC

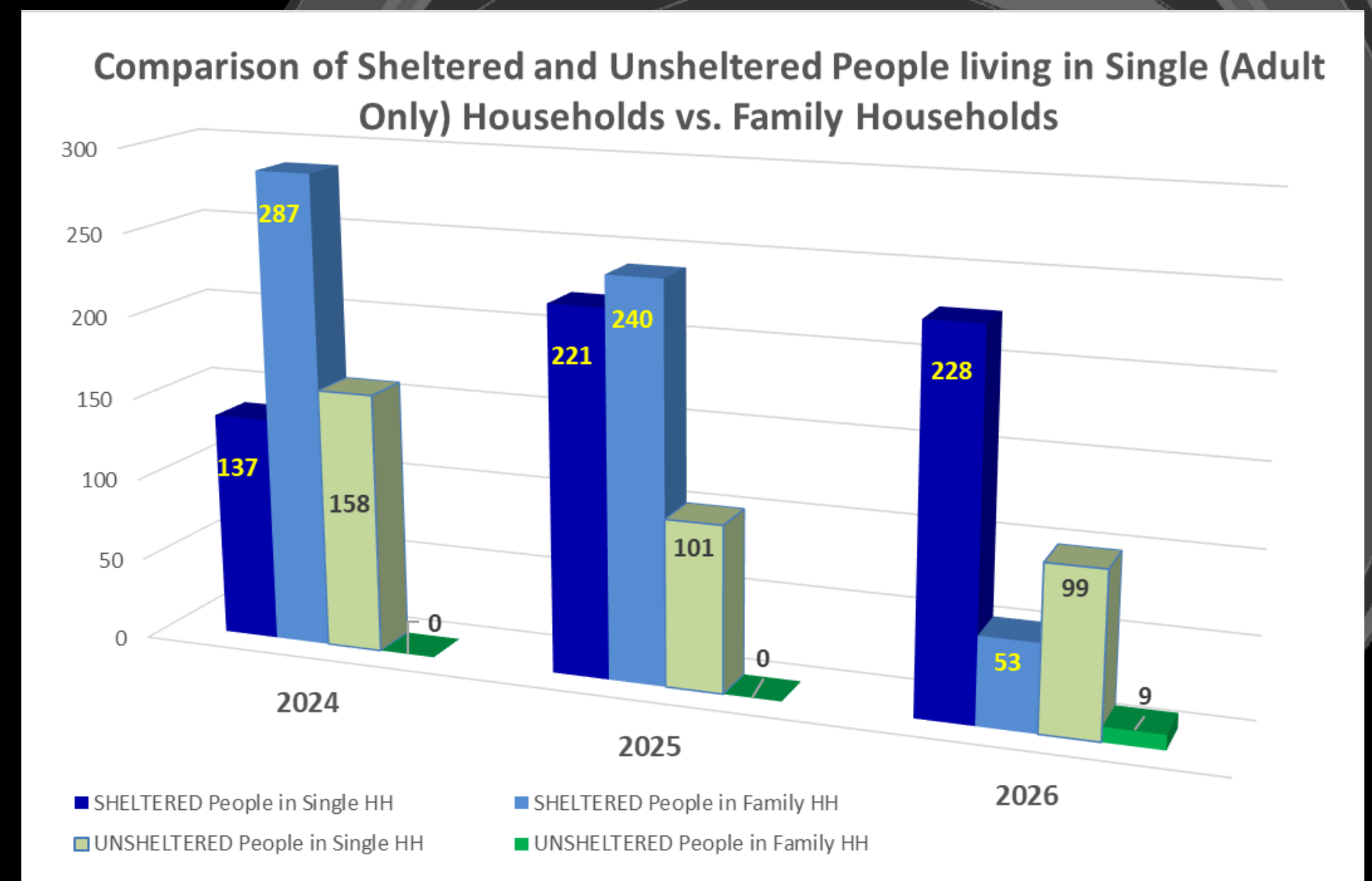
### Sheltered adults in single households.

In 2024 and 2025 the number of sheltered adults in single households accounted for far fewer people than the number of sheltered people living in families. With the deactivation and closing of family shelters, this changed dramatically during the 2026 count.

### Unsheltered people in family households.

In 2026, of the 108 people who were unsheltered, almost all were in single adult-only households; only one family was unhoused the night of the 2026 count.

### Person-Centered



# Statistical Highlights

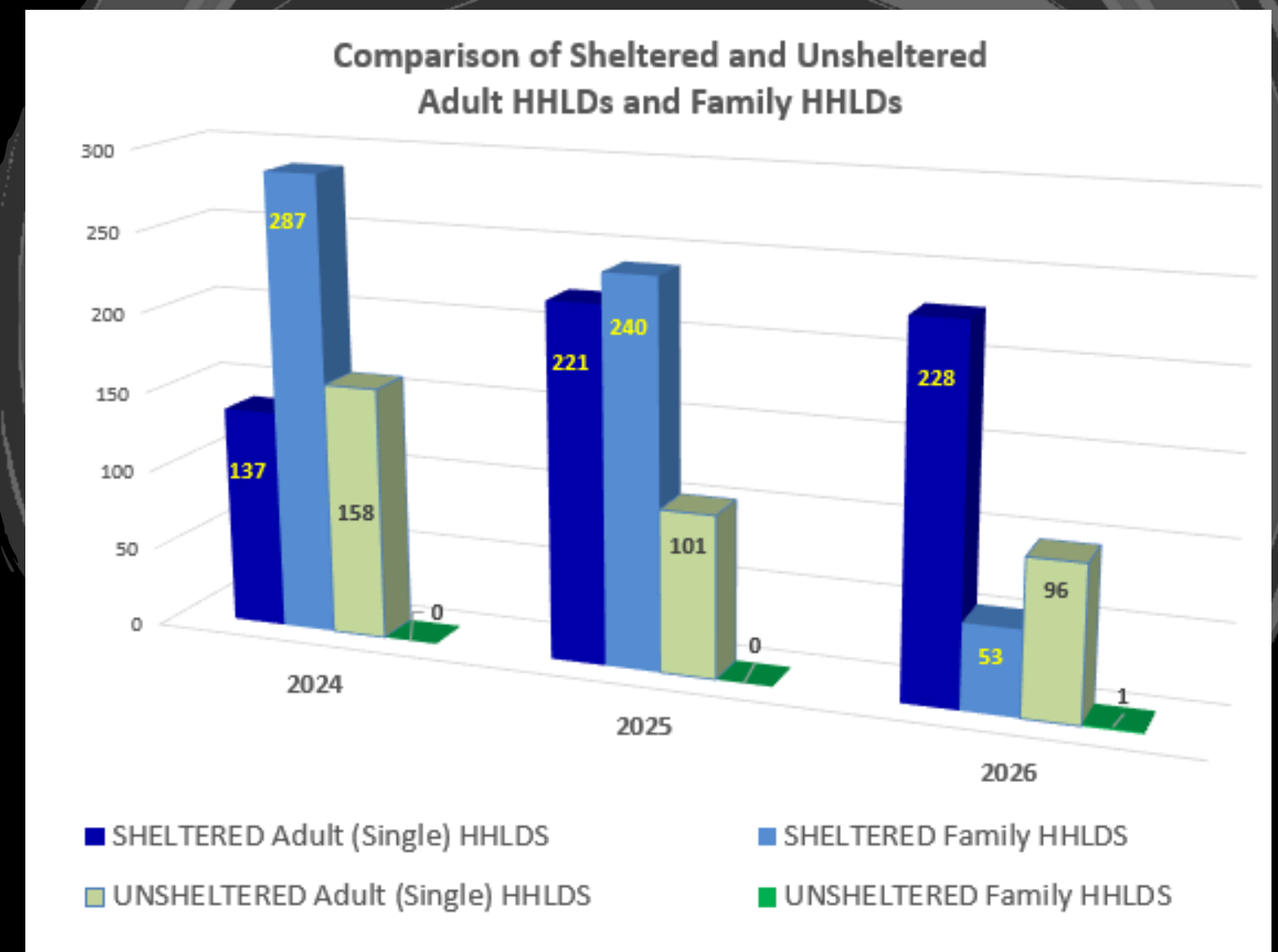
## Bristol County CoC Housing-Centered

### Individual Households compared with Family Households

Sheltered adult-only (individual) households increased substantially over the three-year period, rising from 137 in 2024 to 221 in 2025 and 228 in 2026. This suggests growing reliance on sheltered services among single adults.

Sheltered family households declined sharply each year, dropping dramatically from 287 in 2024 to 53 in 2026—a reduction of 82%. This is the most significant trend shown in the chart and directly relates to the State's shift in family shelter policies resulting in closed family shelters within the BCCC.

By 2026, sheltered single adults became the largest household group represented in the data, overtaking sheltered family households.



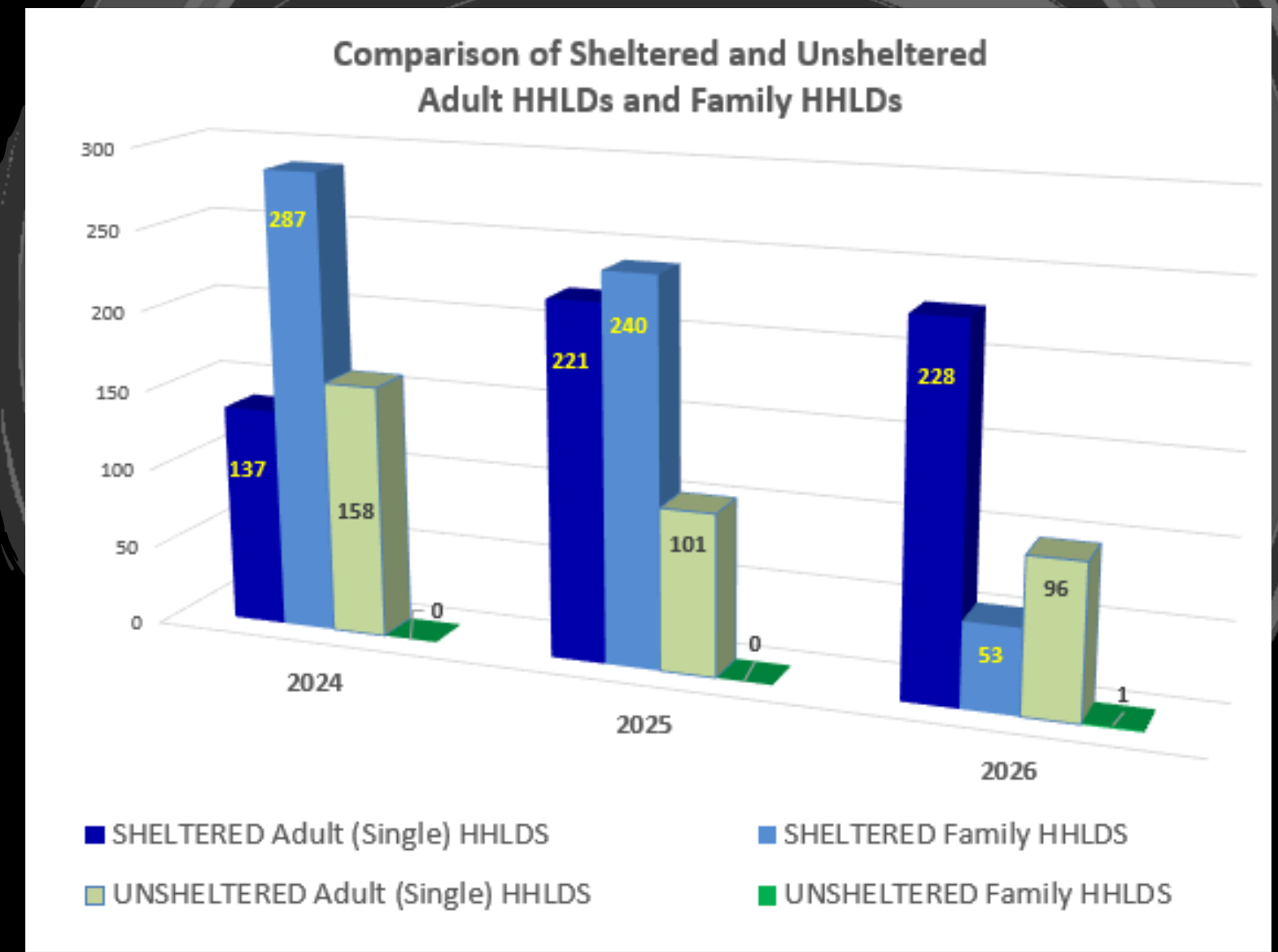
# Statistical Highlights

## Bristol County CoC Housing-Centered

### Adult-only Individual Households compared with Family Households

Unsheltered adult-only households steadily decreased over time, falling from 158 in 2024 to 101 in 2025 and 96 in 2026. This may indicate improved engagement of unsheltered single adults into shelter or housing resources.

Unsheltered family households remained extremely low across all years, with 0 households in 2024 and 2025 and only 1 household in 2026. Family homelessness appears to be overwhelmingly sheltered rather than unsheltered.



# Statistical Highlights

## Chronic Homelessness



# Statistical Highlights

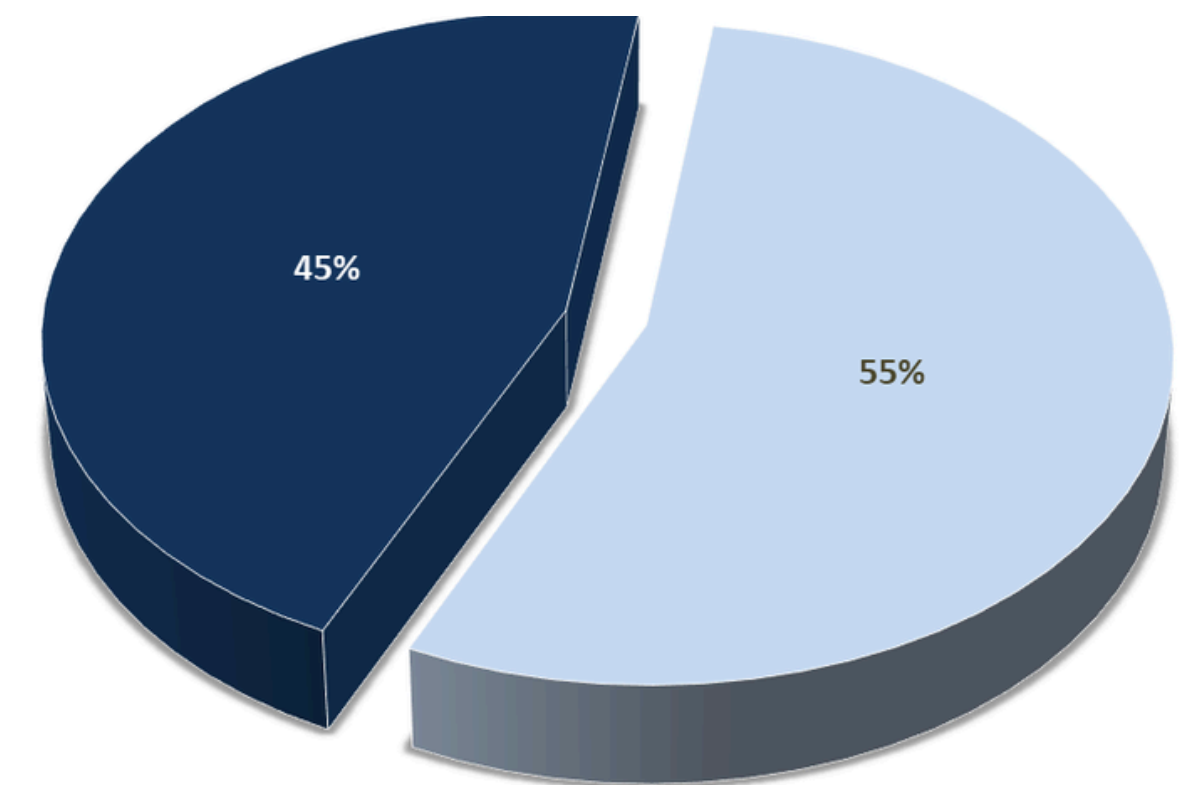
## Bristol County CoC

### Those unsheltered identifying as **chronically homeless...**

Roughly 45% of those who were unsheltered were identified as being chronically homeless during the 2026 PIT Count.

This figure reflects only a slight increase over the 41% of unsheltered persons who were chronically homeless during the 2025 PIT Count.

Unsheltered Persons who were experiencing Chronic Homelessness in 2026



■ Unsheltered Experiencing Chronic Homelessness  
■ Unsheltered Non-Chronic

# Statistical Highlights

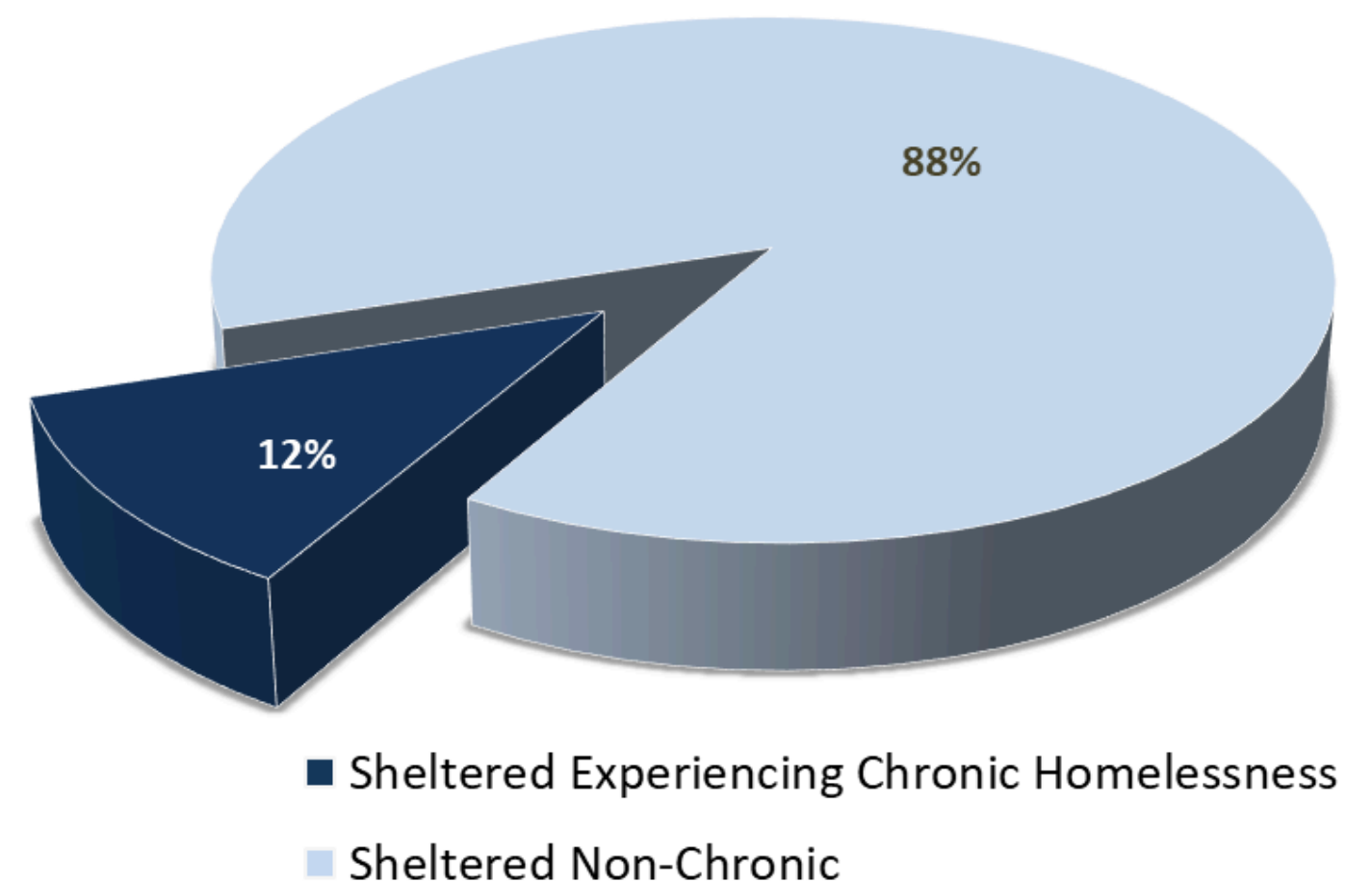
## Bristol County CoC

### Those living in shelter identified as being chronically homeless...

The number of those in shelter in 2026 who were chronically homeless increased over the previous year. In 2026, 12% of those sheltered met the chronic homeless definition compared with just 4% in 2025.

The increase from 4% in 2025 to 12% in 2026 represents a tripling in the proportion of sheltered individuals who were chronically homeless, indicating that the shelter system may be serving people with more intensive and complex needs than in prior years.

Sheltered Persons who were experiencing Chronic Homelessness in 2026



# Statistical Highlights

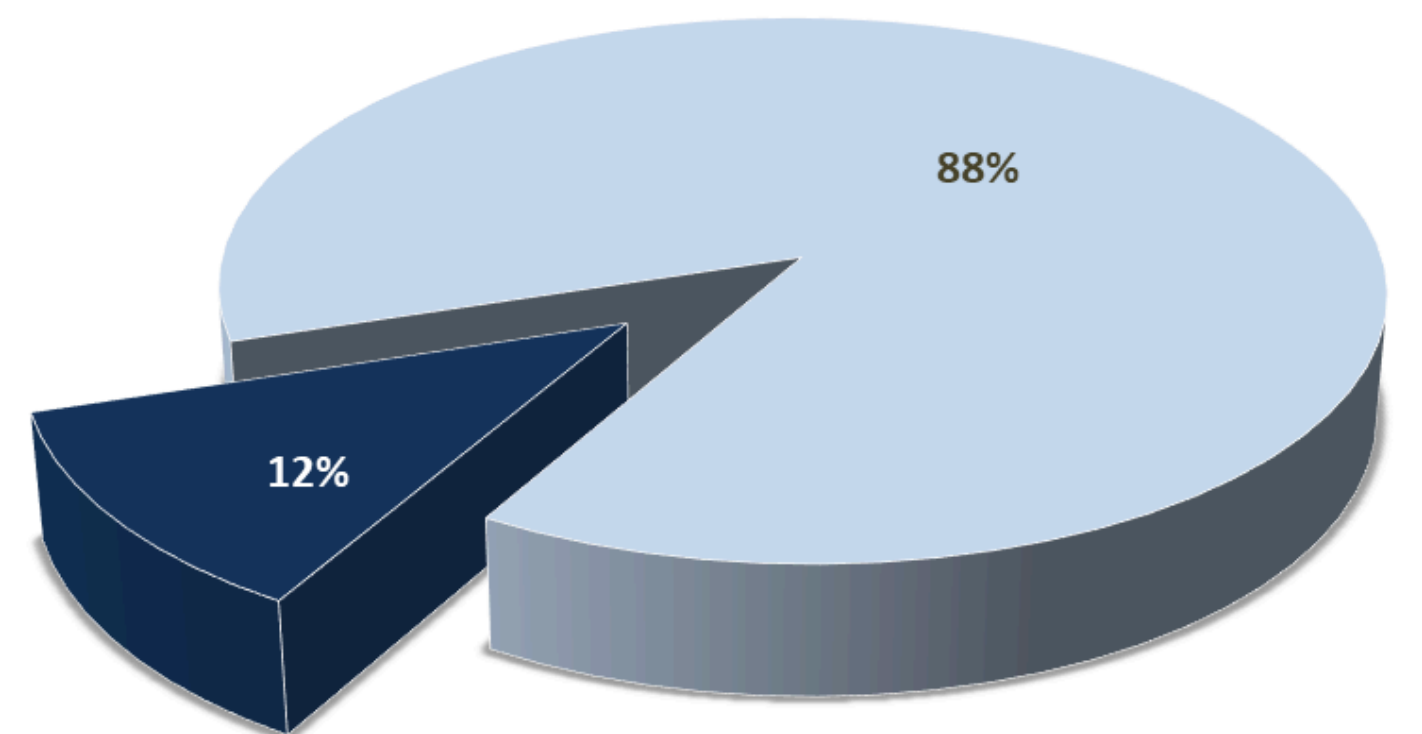
## Bristol County CoC

### Those living in shelter identified as being **chronically homeless...**

This could mean that more chronically homeless individuals were successfully engaged indoors and connected to shelter rather than remaining unsheltered, which may reflect stronger outreach, coordinated entry, or encampment engagement efforts.

It may also suggest that households with shorter-term homelessness were exiting shelter more quickly, leaving a higher concentration of people with greater barriers to housing stability within the sheltered population.

**Sheltered Persons who were experiencing Chronic Homelessness in 2026**



- Sheltered Experiencing Chronic Homelessness
- Sheltered Non-Chronic

# Statistical Highlights

## Subpopulations



# Statistical Highlights

2024	SELF IDENTIFIED CONDITIONS*	EMERGENCY SHELTERS	TRANSITIONAL HOUSING	PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING, ETC.	UNSHELTERED	TOTAL COC 2024
Key Subpopulation Insights	Serious Mental Health Issues	62	4	147	99	<b>312</b>
	Substance Use Disorder	22	4	66	71	<b>163</b>
	Victim/Survivor Domestic Violence	44	9	40	9	<b>102</b>

\*NOTE: Not all individuals self-identified, and of those that did, some may have self-identified as having one or multiple conditions; because of this, these figures will not add up to the total number of people counted.

# Statistical Highlights

2025	SELF IDENTIFIED CONDITIONS*	EMERGENCY SHELTERS	TRANSITIONAL HOUSING	PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING, ETC.	UNSHELTERED	TOTAL COC 2025
Key Subpopulation Insights	Serious Mental Health Issues	77	15	154	69	<b>315</b>
	Substance Use Disorder	21	13	54	44	<b>132</b>
	Victim/Survivor Domestic Violence	55	9	39	7	<b>110</b>

*\*NOTE: Not all individuals self-identified, and of those that did, some may have self-identified as having one or multiple conditions; because of this, these figures will not add up to the total number of people counted.*

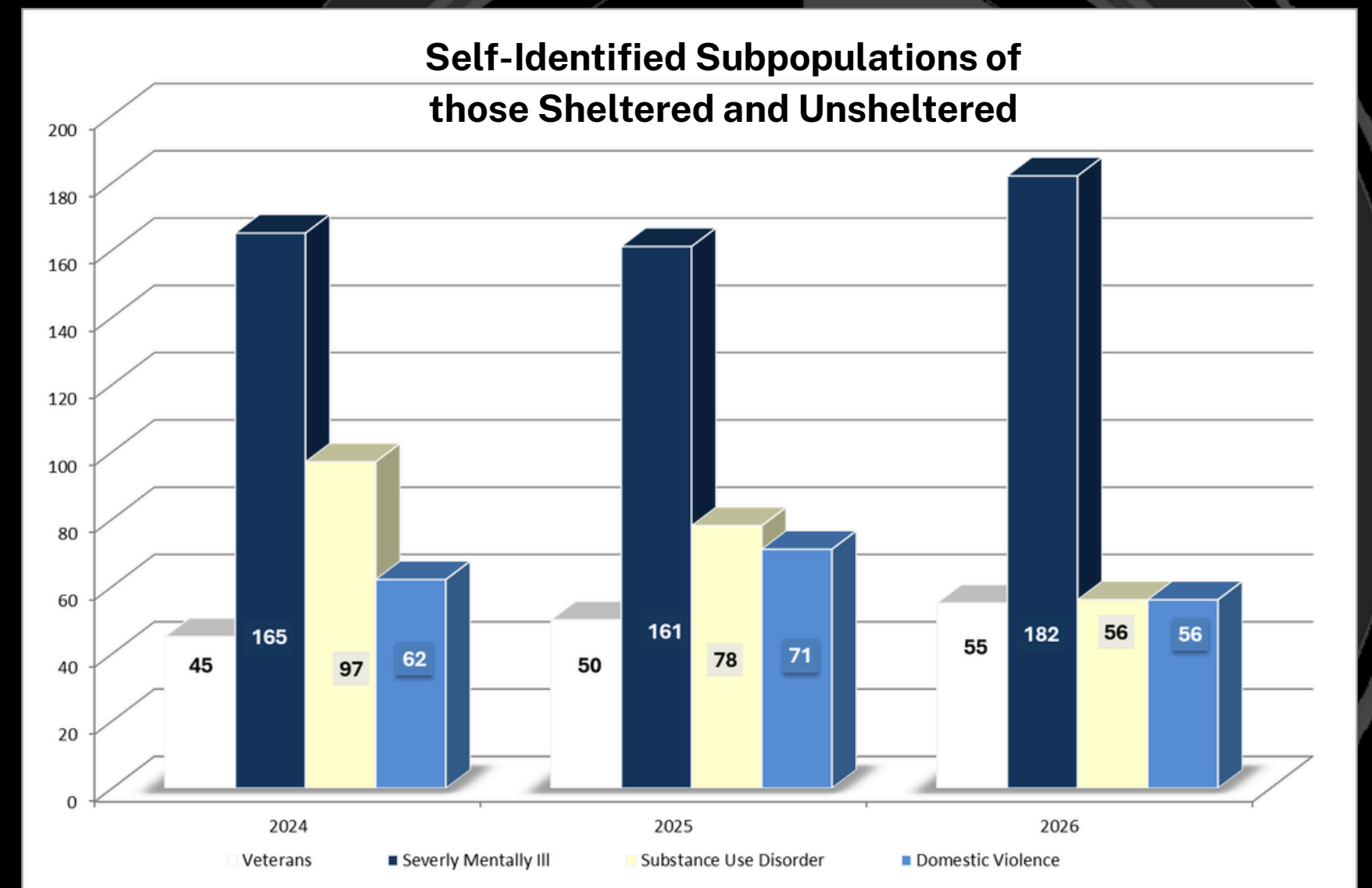
# Statistical Highlights

2026	SELF IDENTIFIED CONDITIONS*	EMERGENCY SHELTERS	TRANSITIONAL HOUSING	PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING, ETC.	UNSHELTERED	TOTAL COC 2026
Key Subpopulation Insights	Serious Mental Health Issues	108	23	154	51	<b>336</b>
	Substance Use Disorder	38	3	65	15	<b>121</b>
	Victim/Survivor Domestic Violence	44	7	33	5	<b>89</b>

*\*NOTE: Not all individuals self-identified, and of those that did, some may have self-identified as having one or multiple conditions; because of this, these figures will not add up to the total number of people counted.*

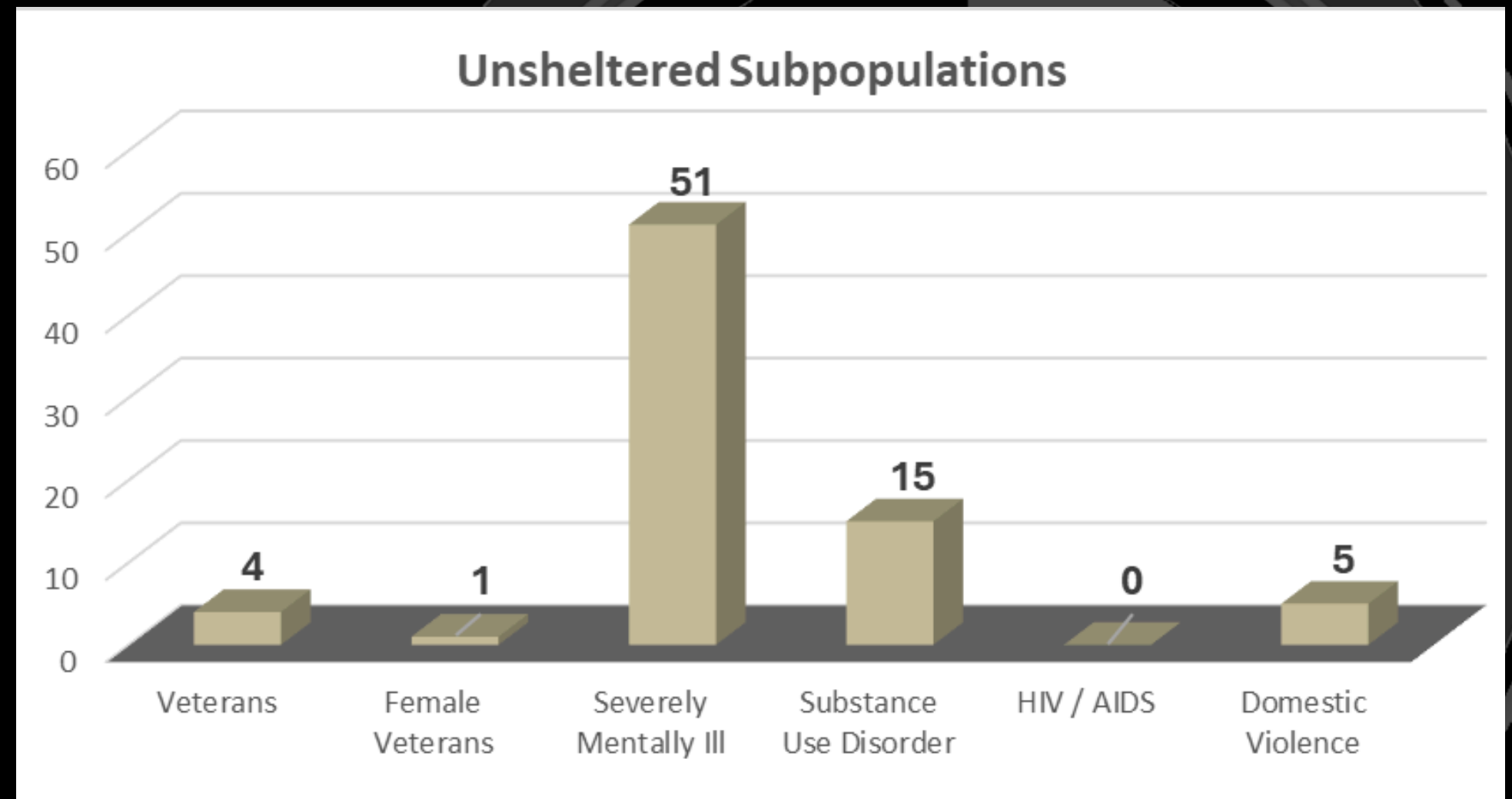
# Statistical Highlights

- **Across the board**, those both sheltered and unsheltered and self-identifying as having lived experience with Serious Mental Illness (SMI) have continued to be the most prevalent self-identified subpopulation. In 2026 those sheltered and unsheltered identified as having an SMI at a rate nearly four times that of the next highest group, those living with addiction (Substance Use Disorder – SUD).
- For the first time, **domestic violence** victims/survivors identified at a rate equal to those self-identifying as living with SUD during the 2026 Count.



# Statistical Highlights

- Among those **unsheltered** at the time of the 2026 PIT Count, people identifying as having experience with SMI was over three times more common than those iself reporting with SUDs.
- Data from the 2026 Count suggests that this unsheltered population is disproportionately impacted by behavioral health challenges, particularly severe mental illness and substance use disorders. This indicates an even stronger coordinated effort between homelessness services, mental health providers, crisis response systems, and permanent supportive housing resources.

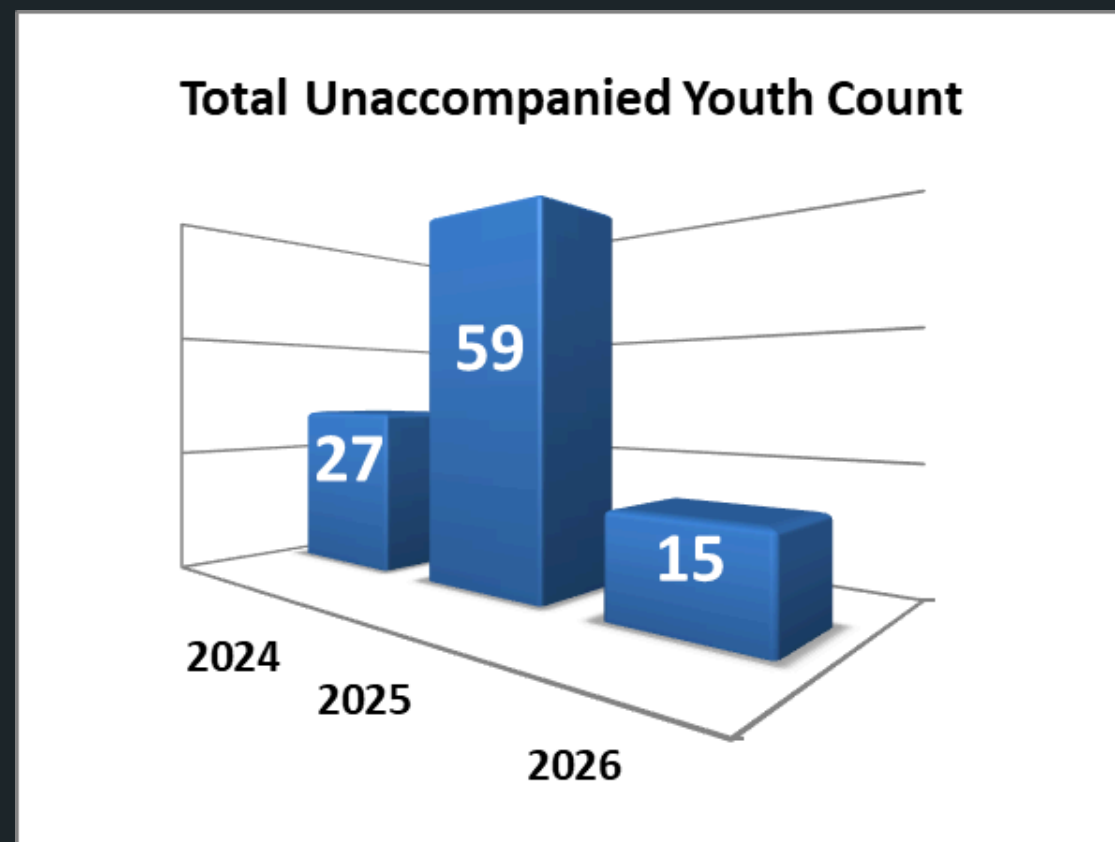


# Statistical Highlights

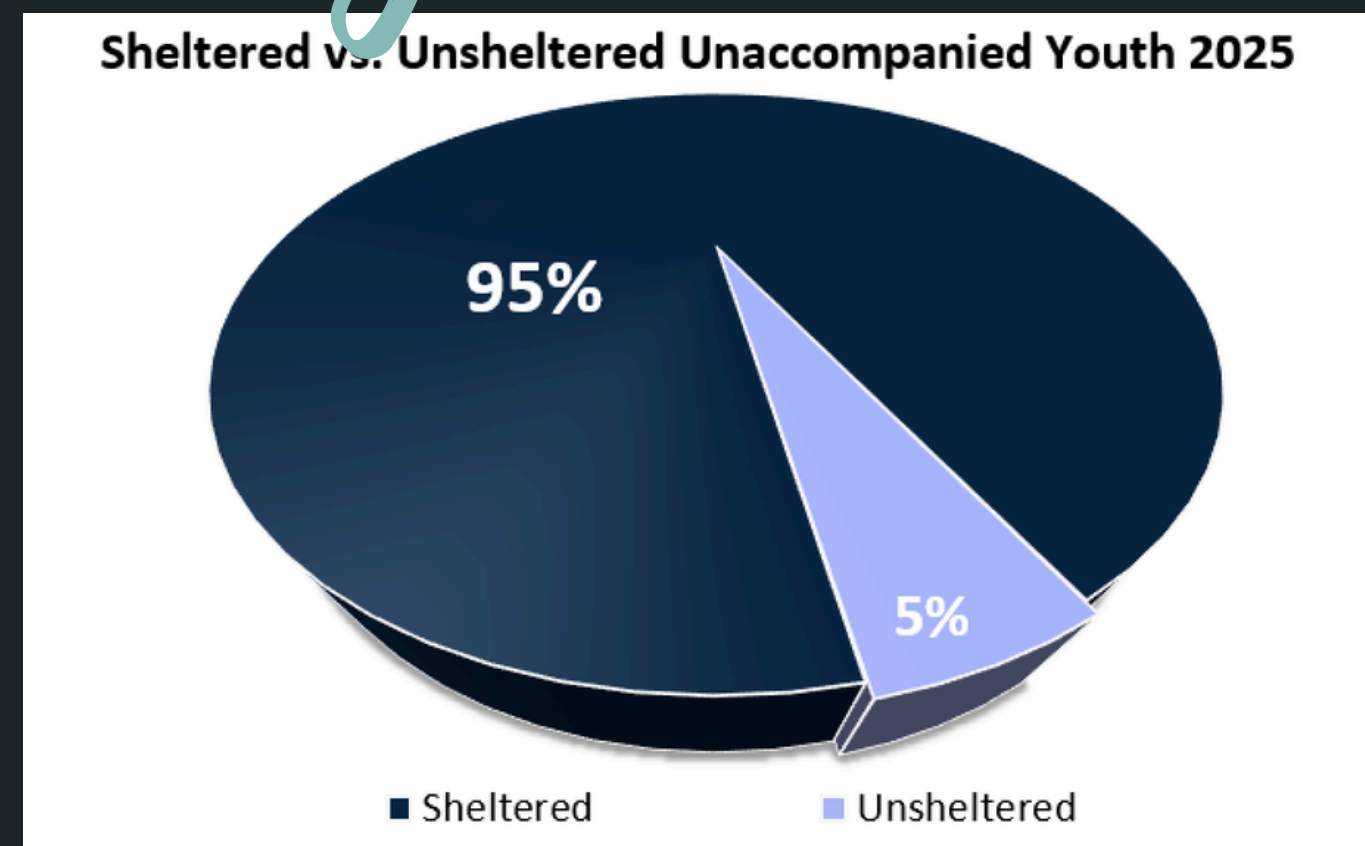
## Unaccompanied Youth



# Statistical Highlights



The overall number of people considered as unaccompanied youth in 2026 decreased by 75% over 2025's figure. Despite this, both years show that this cohort accounts for a very small percentage of the overall number of people counted.



Of those considered to be unaccompanied youth in 2026, 60% were found to be living in shelters contrasting with the smaller percentage of those who were unsheltered on the streets (40%).

This ratio significantly differs from the 2025 count at which time 95% of unaccompanied youth were sheltered and only 5% were on the streets.

*Of note...*

*For the purposes of this study, "Unaccompanied Youth" is considered to be anyone between the ages of 18-24 who are without any parent or guardian.*

# Statistical Highlights

## Race/Ethnicity



# Statistical Highlights

2026 Sheltered and Unsheltered Self-Identified Race & Ethnicity

■ AMERICAN INDIAN, ALASKA  
NATIVE OR INDIGENOUS  
■ AMERICAN INDIAN, ALASKA  
NATIVE OR INDIGENOUS &  
HIS / LAT  
■ ASIAN OR ASIAN AMERICAN

■ ASIAN OR ASIAN AMERICAN &  
HIS / LAT

■ BLACK AFRICAN AMERICAN  
OR AFRICAN

■ BLACK AFRICAN AMERICAN  
OR AFRICAN HIS / LAT

■ HISPANIC / LATINA

■ MIDDLE EASTERN OR NORTH  
AFRICAN

■ MIDDLE EASTERN OR NORTH  
AFRICAN / LAT

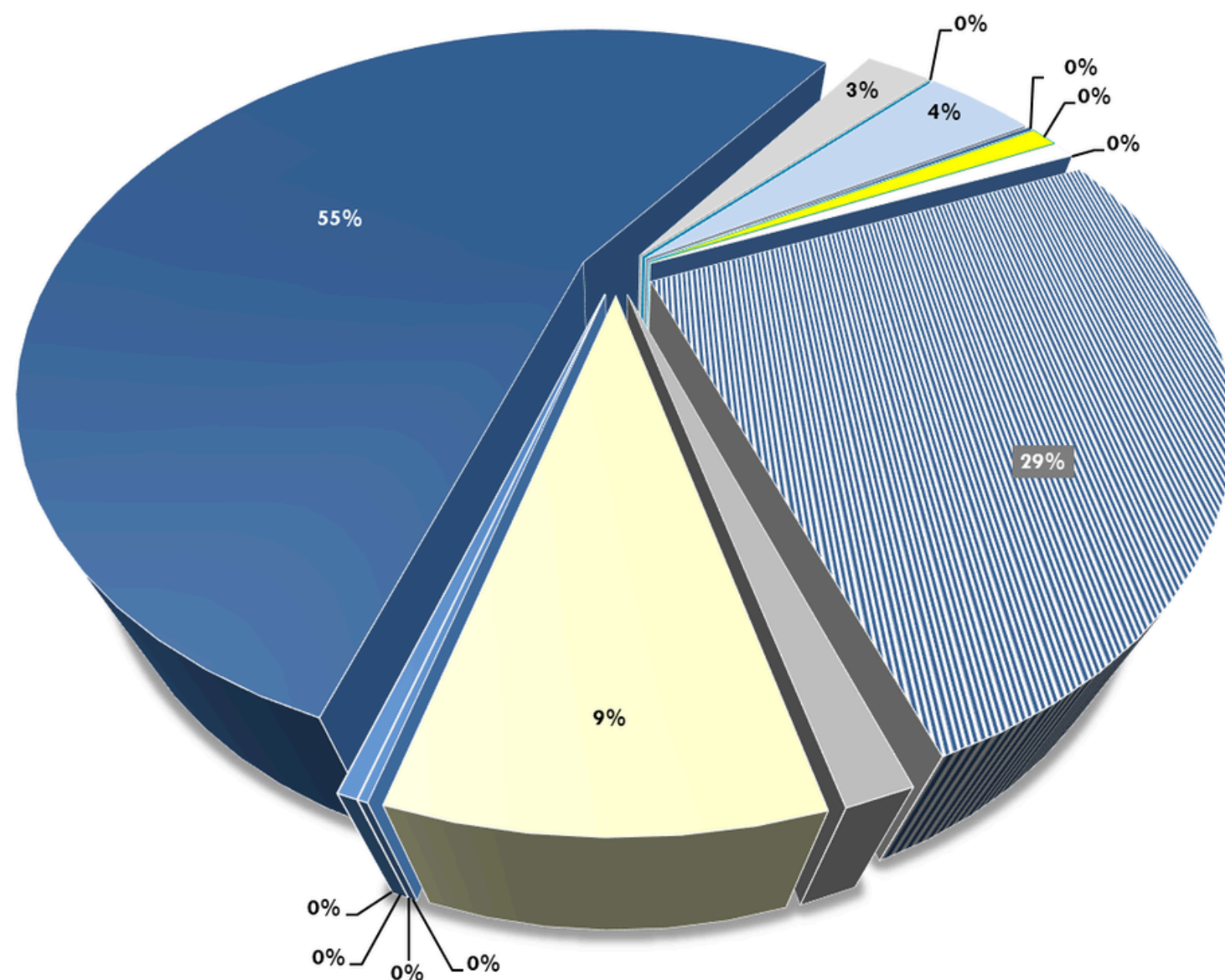
■ NATIVE HAWAIIAN OR  
PACIFIC ISLANDER

■ NATIVE HAWAIIAN OR  
PACIFIC ISLANDER / LAT

■ WHITE

■ WHITE & HISP / LAT

■ MULTI-RACIAL & HISP / LAT



- Of the **total 498 sheltered and unsheltered** persons counted, 273 identified as White (55%) and 129 persons identified as Black African American or African (26%).
- Following HUD Data Collection Guidance, ethnicity was intertwined with race. This resulted in 67 of the respondents (13%) identifying across multiple categories as Hispanic.
- While 77% of **unsheltered** individuals responding self-identified as white, 13% self-identified as Black African American or African and 6% identified as Hispanic.

*Housing Inventory*

# Housing Inventory

- During the 2026 PIT Count, a Housing Inventory was also conducted to better understand the Bristol County Continuum of Care's shelter and housing inventory.
- In the course of developing its Housing Inventory Chart (HIC), a utilization study was also undertaken to provide a snapshot as to the extent to which beds were occupied during a point in time.
- **Emergency Shelters** in 2026 had a utilization rate of 78% while **Transitional Shelter** had a 96% rate, and both were higher than those from the previous year. **Permanent Housing** Utilization was even higher with a 99% utilization rate in both 2026.



# Housing Inventory

## Emergency

Prog. Type	Organization Name	Program Name	PIT Count	Year-Round Beds	Utilization Rate
ES	Catholic Social Services Inc.	Sister Rose and Grace House	34	36	94%
ES	Justice Resource Institute	Focus on the Family	23	44	52%
ES	SEMCOA	Harbour House	38	59	64%
ES	Greater New Bedford Women's Center	Artemis I Shelter	11	14	79%
ES	Greater New Bedford Women's Center	Artemis II Shelter	10	16	63%
ES	Catholic Social Services Inc.	Ascension House	15	18	83%
ES	Catholic Social Services Inc.	Samaritan House	18	18	100%
ES	Justice Resource Institute	GBCatch Focus	61	163	37%
ES	SEMCOA	Taunton Family Center	18	28	64%
ES	Catholic Social Services Inc.	CCFR WRAP Overflow	29	30	97%
ES	Steppingstone, Inc.	Steppingstone Overflow	51	51	100%
<b>EMERGENCY SHELTER TOTAL</b>			<b>308</b>	<b>477</b>	<b>65%</b>

The **2026 Emergency Shelter Utilization rate of 78%** (including seasonal overflow shelters because they were open) fell significantly short of both the 2025 rate of 93% and the 2024 rate of 87%).

# Housing Inventory

## Transitional

Organization Name	Program Name	PIT Count	Year-Round Beds	Utilization Rate
SE MA Vets Housing Program, Inc.	VTH GPD	6	7	86%
SE MA Vets Housing Program, Inc.	SITH Program	13	13	100%
SE MA Vets Housing Program, Inc.	Vet's Main House	24	24	100%
Steppingstone, Inc.	Graduate Program	4	7	57%
Steppingstone, Inc.	NB Women's Therap.Community	18	21	86%
Greater New Bedford Women's Center	Housing Stabilization	17	13	131%
<b>TRANSITIONAL HOUSING TOTAL</b>		<b>82</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>96%</b>

The **2026 Transitional Housing (Shelter) Utilization rate of 96%** was higher than the Continuum's 2025 utilization rate of 93% and its 2024 utilization rate of 83%.

All transitional housing is located within the City of New Bedford.

# Housing Inventory

## Permanent

Organization Name	Program Name	PIT Count	Year-Round Beds	Utilization Rate
Catholic Charities of the Fall River Diocese	Portico	89	83	107%
PAACA	Step Up	20	35	57%
PACE	Green Light Project	4	9	44%
Providence VA	HUD - VASH	87	87	100%
SFS	Family Preservation Program	65	62	105%
SE Veterans	VTH - PSH	39	41	95%
Steppingstone	Welcome Home	22	22	100%
Catholic Charities of the Fall River Diocese	Emergency Solutions	0	0	N/A
NeighborWorks Housing Solutions	EOHLC HomeBase Stabilization	1615	1615	100%
SSVF	SSVF	24	24	100%
PAACA	STEP UP RRH	0	0	N/A
PACE	PACE Housing Services	0	0	N/A
CCBC	Homes with Heart	37	42	88%
CCBC	Dighton	11	10	110%
CCBC	Heritage	5	6	83%
Catholic Charities of the Fall River Diocese	Steadfast	11	14	79%
NeighborWorks Housing Solutions	150 Pleasant Street	22	22	100%
<b>PERMANENT HOUSING TOTAL</b>		<b>2051</b>	<b>2072</b>	<b>99%</b>

Permanent Housing had the highest utilization rate of all housing types in **2026 at 99%** indicating very few unit vacancies. This rate is also consistent with the past few years tracking permanent housing serving as an important indicator of need for additional permanent housing for those coming out of homelessness.

**10** *Take Aways*

# Take Aways

**1** **Policy-Driven Count Drop.** The 2026 PIT Count plummeted 56% from 1,130 people counted in 2025 to just 498 in 2026. This shift mirrors--and can largely be attributed to--a 75% reduction in state-run family shelter capacity.

**2** **Hidden Street Homelessness.** The 108 people counted as being unsheltered resulted in a somewhat artificially deflated number because of freezing weather. Factoring in 80 overflow shelter occupants pushes true street-level demand to 188, a 15% increase over the previous year.

**3** **Demographic Inversion:** Single-adult shelter placements (228) outpaced family placements (53) by 130%. Deactivating family shelters structurally shifted system demand to individual beds.

**4** **Sheltered Chronicity Tripled.** Chronic homelessness among sheltered individuals surged from 4% (2025) to 12% (2026). This indicates slower housing-exit velocities for high-barrier clients

# Take Aways

**5 Mental Health Predominance.** Combined PIT data identifies Serious Mental Illness (SMI) as the primary subpopulation (336 individuals). SMI prevalence tracks nearly triple the rate of Substance Use Disorders.

**6 Severe Unsheltered Acuity.** Among the unsheltered population, self-reported SMI (51) is over three times more common than those identifying as having an SUD (15). This highlights an acute need for specialized street outreach. To this end, strategic efforts that ensure specialized clinical outreach teams combining housing navigators with psychiatric care directly target the high concentration of unsheltered individuals suffering from SMI could prove successful in reducing the number of those suffering with SMI.

**7 Vulnerability Convergence.** For the first time, domestic violence survivors (56) and individuals identifying as having an SUD (56) registered identical counts among those unsheltered and living on the streets.

# Take Aways

**8** **Youth Cohort Collapse.** Unaccompanied youth counts dropped 75% from 2025 to 2026 to just 15 individuals. Street vulnerability increased sharply among unaccompanied youth with 40% left unsheltered in 2026 versus just 5% in 2025. Even though as a percentage of the overall shelter and street count, unaccompanied youth continued to only account for a very small percentage, deploying dedicated rapid rehousing funds to those youth currently remaining unsheltered could prevent them from lapsing into long-term homeless chronicity.

**9** **Race/Ethnicity.** White individuals comprise 55% of the total count but 77% of the unsheltered population. Black individuals represent 26% of the total PIT, showing disproportionate system representation.

**10** **Inventory Stress Metrics.** Critical infrastructure remains choked, led by a 99% Permanent Housing utilization rate. Systemic bottlenecks remain severe despite the lower emergency shelter usage (65%). Across the board such high utilization rates coupled with increased demand signals the need for additional shelter and housing within the CoC.

# 2026

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