WORKFORCE SERVICES
HOMELESS SERVICES

Utah Office of Homeless Services

2025 ANNUAL REPORT: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Wayne Niederhauser, State Homeless Coordinator

In 2025, with continued investment and policy direction from the Utah State Legislature, the Office of Homeless Services advanced several key areas within the state's homelessness response system. Funding allocated during the 2025 General Session supported progress in shelter capacity, winter response, homelessness prevention, and system governance. These efforts contributed to increased shelter access during critical winter months and improvements in accountability and system performance.

KEY INVESTMENTS AND IMPACTS

Emergency Shelter & Winter Response

- $3.9 million in ongoing funding to launch and operate a second family shelter in the Salt Lake Valley.
- In FY26, $5.5 million in one-time funding was allocated to expand emergency shelter operations statewide during cold weather events. In FY25, winter response investment supported 901 additional winter shelter beds, including 256 Code Blue beds and 3,370 emergency shelter nights provided in a hotel setting.
- $16.7 million in ongoing, annually adjusted funding to support homeless shelter cities by mitigating community impacts, enhancing emergency response and strengthening local services.
- The Legislature authorized tools to accelerate site acquisition for a transformative homeless services campus, with statutory authority limited to a defined area in Salt Lake City, northeast of the airport. The planned campus will include between 1,200 and 1,600 beds.
- Emergency shelters throughout Utah have strengthened their policies and procedures to better ensure a safe and supportive environment for everyone.

Impact: The 2025 Point-in-Time (PIT) Count recorded a 715-person increase in overall homelessness. Critically, 95% of that increase (677 individuals) were sheltered, compared to just 18% in 2023, evidence of the expanded winter shelter response working as intended. Data also shows an increase in the number of children experiencing homelessness, highlighting the importance of family shelter.

Homelessness Prevention

- Continued investment in the HOME Court pilot, diverting justice-involved individuals from jail and shelter to treatment.

- In FY25, deeply affordable and attainable housing grants supported the development of 88 deeply affordable units, contributing to a total of 160 new housing units statewide. Strategic investments through the Affordable Housing Grant (AHG) expanded access to stable, long-term housing for Utahns most in need.

- Our commitment to addressing Utah's affordable housing crisis remains strong. We continue working to ensure Utah families have access to the resources they need for stable, long-term housing. At the same time, we are dedicated to expanding access to quality mental and behavioral health care—providing individuals and families with the support necessary to thrive.

Impact: These efforts prevent homelessness among vulnerable populations and support long-term stability, particularly for families and youth at risk.

Data-Informed Innovations

For the first time, Utah's 2025 Point-in-Time (PIT) Count included a question asking unsheltered individuals what types of shelter they would use if available:

- 610 preferred private rooms
- 568 selected bring-your-own setups (cars, tents, RVs) with shared facilities
- 511 would use small units with shared bathrooms
- 356 were open to congregate shelters
- 236 selected none of the above

Impact: This data confirms that most unsheltered Utahns are open to accessing shelter, if it aligns with their needs for privacy, autonomy, and safety.

In response to this need and the success of the initial pilot, the Utah Office of Homeless Services transitioned the microshelter project from a pilot to a permanent program in partnership with Switchpoint. On September 28, 2024, Phase II of the microshelter community officially opened at a state-owned site in Salt Lake City (548 S 700 W). Since its launch in November 2023, the community has provided hundreds of individuals with safe, private, non-congregate shelter.

Residents have integrated seamlessly into the surrounding community. With 24/7 on-site staffing, the program has generated few calls for service from business owners or law enforcement which demonstrates both its effectiveness and sustainability. Modular design has also proven to be more cost-efficient than traditional shelter construction, requiring fewer infrastructure resources and allowing for faster deployment.

CONCLUSION

The 2025 legislative session provided essential tools, funding, and policy mechanisms to respond to urgent needs within Utah's homelessness system. While gains were made in winter shelter access, prevention efforts, and service coordination, these improvements require sustained investment to ensure long-term impact.

The Office of Homeless Services extends sincere thanks to the Governor's Office, the Utah State Legislature, the Utah Homeless Services Board, local government partners across city and county municipalities, nonprofit organizations, and the philanthropic community for their continued leadership, collaboration, and support.

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2025 ANNUAL DATA REPORT: KEY FINDINGS

KEY FINDINGS

Our vision for the homeless response system in Utah is to make homelessness rare, brief and nonrecurring; that all people experiencing homelessness can thrive to their fullest potential; and that our communities are stable and safe for everyone.

—Shared vision statement of the Office of Homeless Services and Utah Homeless Services Board

MAKING HOMELESSNESS RARE: Prevention is the first and most effective step in making homelessness rare in Utah. Addressing poverty through sustainable economic opportunities, affordable housing, and strong social safety nets can reduce the risk of homelessness before it begins. Utah's booming economy and fast-growing population have outpaced the availability of affordable housing and overwhelmed behavioral health services, widening the gap between need and access across the state.

- The annual 2025 Point-in-Time (PIT) Count showed 4,584 Utahns experiencing homelessness on a single night, an 18% increase from the previous year. Subpopulations identified in the PIT include:
  - The number of Utah children experiencing homelessness increased from 589 to 662, a 12% increase. Children now make up 14% of Utah's total Point-in-Time (PIT) count, still below the national data reported in 2024, where children accounted for 19% of the population experiencing homelessness in the United States.
  - The number of Utahns over age 64 experiencing homelessness rose from 251 to 356, an increase of 42%.
    - This increase may reflect broader demographic shifts: Utah's 65+ population grew by nearly 58% from 2013 to 2023 and is expected to double by 2060 (Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute). Nationally, this age group has grown from 13% of the U.S. population in 2010 to nearly 17% in 2022, and is projected to exceed 20% by 2030 (U.S. Census Bureau). At the same time, more seniors are being priced out of housing, often living on fixed incomes that can't keep pace with rising rents and property costs.

  - The number of veterans increased by 36%, rising from 121 to 165. While this represents a notable year-over-year increase, the 2025 total remains within the historical range, falling between the 2023 count of 181 and the 2022 count of 155.

- The overall increase in homelessness as reported by the PIT was 715 people compared to the previous year. Of those, 677 (95%) were sheltered and just 38 (5%) were unsheltered, a dramatic shift from 2023, when the PIT count rose by 131 people, but only 23 (18%) were sheltered while 108 (82%) remained unsheltered. This year's dramatic increase in sheltered individuals compared to unsheltered is largely attributed to the expansion of winter shelter capacity, which allowed more individuals experiencing homelessness to access shelter.

- A total of 10,261 individuals in Utah experienced homelessness for the first time according to HMIS data, an increase of 5%.

- Utah's homelessness rate now stands at 13 per 10,000 people, up from 11 per 10,000, but still well below the 2024 national rate of 23 per 10,000.

MAKING HOMELESSNESS BRIEF: Ensuring that homelessness is brief requires robust resources and comprehensive wrap-around services. Access to mental health and substance use disorder treatment, job training, and affordable housing helps individuals stabilize and transition quickly to permanent housing.

- In 2024, 75% of emergency shelter stays were 90 days or less, down from 80% in 2023 and below previous years. While this trend indicates people are experiencing homelessness for longer periods of time, most only need short-term shelter support before restabilizing.

- The average length of stay in emergency shelter increased by 10 days (17%) compared to 2023, highlighting the growing difficulty individuals face in securing stable housing. This trend underscores the urgent need for faster housing placements and a broader range of exit options from shelter.

- The percentage of individuals staying 12 months or more was only 2%, remaining stable from 2023.

- The number of Utahns experiencing chronic homelessness on the night of the PIT increased from 906 in 2024 to 1,233 in 2025, a 36% rise. This group represented 27% of the total PIT count, similar to the 28% in 2023. This highlights the continued need for supportive services for individuals with disabilities and long histories of homelessness, while also confirming that chronic homelessness remains a minority of the overall homeless population in Utah.

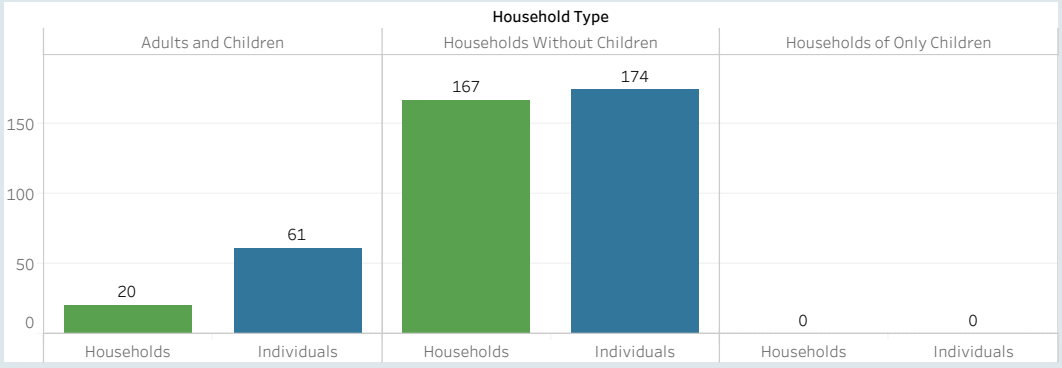
MAKING HOMELESSNESS NON-RECURRING: Achieving lasting housing stability takes more than just providing a place to live—it requires ongoing, individualized support. For individuals and families exiting homelessness, continued access to services like housing assistance, case management, job training, financial counseling, and recovery support is critical to long-term success. Permanent housing programs that integrate these supportive services have proven highly effective in helping Utah's most vulnerable populations stay housed and avoid returning to homelessness.

Supportive housing remains a key driver of long-term stability:

- 93% of individuals in permanent supportive housing either retained their housing or moved on to other permanent options, the fourth consecutive year this success rate has held steady.
- In 2024, the percentage of people returning to homelessness within two years of exiting to permanent supportive housing declined slightly from 25% to 24%.
- These outcomes underscore the effectiveness of permanent housing with wrap-around services in keeping Utah's most vulnerable residents stably housed.

Point in Time Count

AT THE END OF JANUARY EACH YEAR , Utah's Continua of Care (CoC) carry out the Point-in-Time (PIT) Count. While many factors influence who is experiencing homelessness on a single night, the PIT helps communities understand the need for homeless services on a single night. It also provides a better understanding of populations, such as those who are fleeing domestic violence or experiencing unsheltered homelessness, that are underrepresented in other reports and data systems.



Year:
2025
Total PIT Count: **235**

Subpopulation	
Adults with HIV/AIDS	0
Adults with Mental Illness	103
Adults with Substance Abuse Disorders	53
Child of a Youth Parent	2
Chronically Homeless Persons in Households of Adults and Minors	3
Chronically Homeless Veterans	3
Survivors of Domestic Violence (Adults and Minors)	58
Survivors of Domestic Violence (Adults Only)	31
Total Chronically Homeless Persons	35
Unaccompanied Youth (Under Age 25)	4
Veterans	5
Youth Parent (Under Age 25)	1

* Subpopulation data is self reported when the Point-in-Time questionaire is administered.

Year
2025

Location Type
County

County
Utah

Sheltered
All

Point in Time Count

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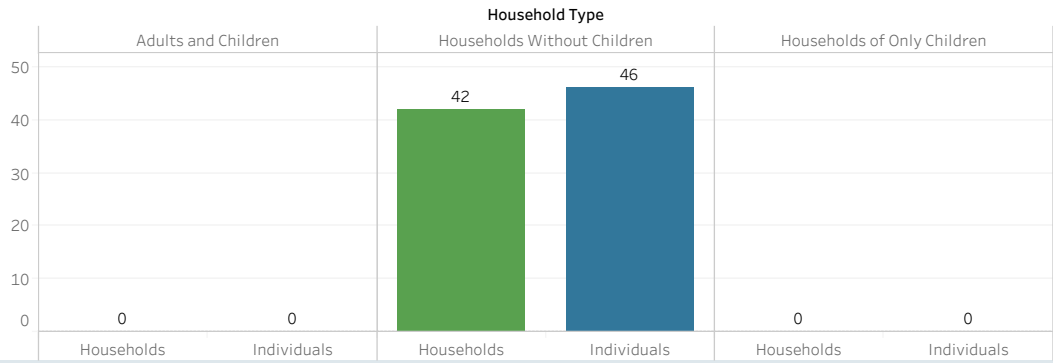

Year:
2025
Total PIT Count: **46**

Subpopulation	
Adults with HIV/AIDS	0
Adults with Mental Illness	20
Adults with Substance Abuse Disorders	3
Child of a Youth Parent	0
Chronically Homeless Persons in Households of Adults and Minors	0
Chronically Homeless Veterans	1
Survivors of Domestic Violence (Adults and Minors)	8
Survivors of Domestic Violence (Adults Only)	8
Total Chronically Homeless Persons	12
Unaccompanied Youth (Under Age 25)	1
Veterans	1
Youth Parent (Under Age 25)	0

* Subpopulation data is self reported when the Point-in-Time questionaire is administered.

Year
2025

Location Type
County

County
Utah

Sheltered
Unsheltered

Point in Time Count

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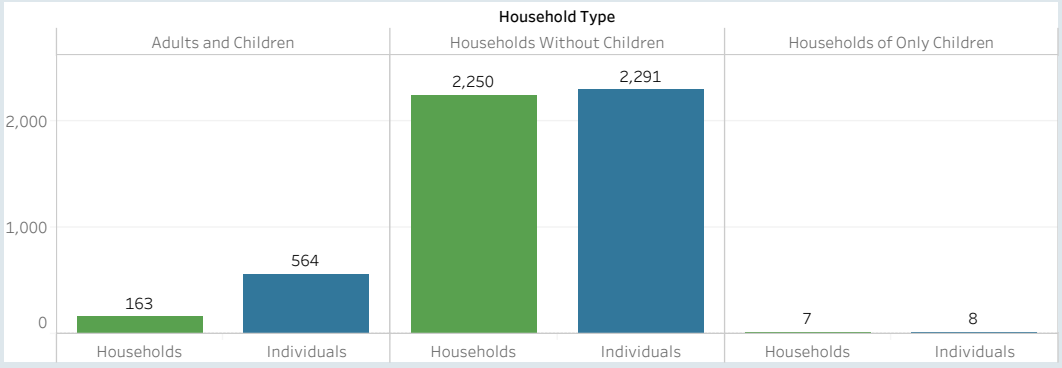

Year:
2025
Total PIT Count: **2,863**

Subpopulation	
Adults with HIV/AIDS	53
Adults with Mental Illness	1,224
Adults with Substance Abuse Disorders	823
Child of a Youth Parent	23
Chronically Homeless Persons in Households of Adults and Minors	34
Chronically Homeless Veterans	32
Survivors of Domestic Violence (Adults and Minors)	370
Survivors of Domestic Violence (Adults Only)	225
Total Chronically Homeless Persons	971
Unaccompanied Youth (Under Age 25)	146
Veterans	119
Youth Parent (Under Age 25)	22

* Subpopulation data is self reported when the Point-in-Time questionaire is administered.

Year
2025

Location Type
County

County
Salt Lake

Sheltered
All

Point in Time Count

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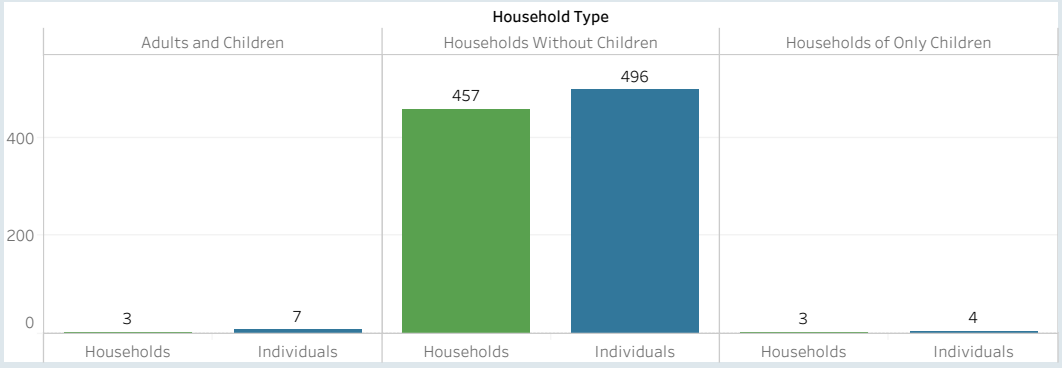

Year:
2025
Total PIT Count: **507**

Subpopulation	
Adults with HIV/AIDS	12
Adults with Mental Illness	249
Adults with Substance Abuse Disorders	151
Child of a Youth Parent	0
Chronically Homeless Persons in Households of Adults and Minors	0
Chronically Homeless Veterans	5
Survivors of Domestic Violence (Adults and Minors)	63
Survivors of Domestic Violence (Adults Only)	59
Total Chronically Homeless Persons	251
Unaccompanied Youth (Under Age 25)	28
Veterans	13
Youth Parent (Under Age 25)	0

* Subpopulation data is self reported when the Point-in-Time questionaire is administered.

Year
2025

Location Type
County

County
Salt Lake

Sheltered
Unsheltered

Point in Time Count

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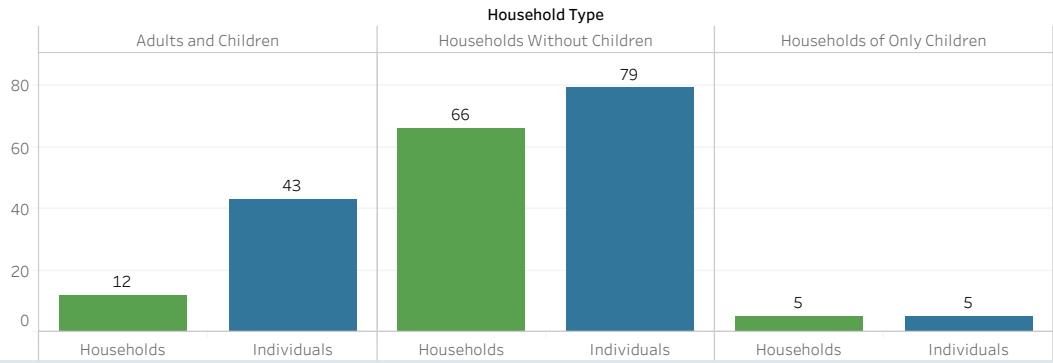


Year:
2025
Total PIT Count: **127**

Subpopulation	
Adults with HIV/AIDS	0
Adults with Mental Illness	35
Adults with Substance Abuse Disorders	5
Child of a Youth Parent	0
Chronically Homeless Persons in Households of Adults and Minors	5
Chronically Homeless Veterans	0
Survivors of Domestic Violence (Adults and Minors)	62
Survivors of Domestic Violence (Adults Only)	30
Total Chronically Homeless Persons	25
Unaccompanied Youth (Under Age 25)	12
Veterans	1
Youth Parent (Under Age 25)	0

* Subpopulation data is self reported when the Point-in-Time questionaire is administered.

Year
2025

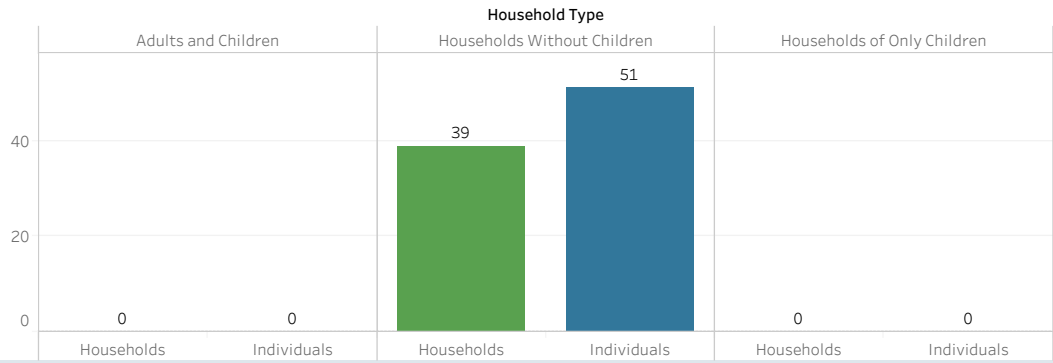
Location Type
County

County
Davis

Sheltered
All

Point in Time Count

AT THE END OF JANUARY EACH YEAR , Utah's Continua of Care (CoC) carry out the Point-in-Time (PIT) Count. While many factors influence who is experiencing homelessness on a single night, the PIT helps communities understand the need for homeless services on a single night. It also provides a better understanding of populations, such as those who are fleeing domestic violence or experiencing unsheltered homelessness, that are underrepresented in other reports and data systems.



Year:
2025
Total PIT Count: **51**

Subpopulation	
Adults with HIV/AIDS	0
Adults with Mental Illness	24
Adults with Substance Abuse Disorders	1
Child of a Youth Parent	0
Chronically Homeless Persons in Households of Adults and Minors	0
Chronically Homeless Veterans	0
Survivors of Domestic Violence (Adults and Minors)	6
Survivors of Domestic Violence (Adults Only)	6
Total Chronically Homeless Persons	19
Unaccompanied Youth (Under Age 25)	4
Veterans	1
Youth Parent (Under Age 25)	0

* Subpopulation data is self reported when the Point-in-Time questionaire is administered.

Year
2025

Location Type
County

County
Davis

Sheltered
Unsheltered