

## Three Year Trend Analysis

### Kalispell Area PIT Data

2021- 2023

	<b>2021</b>	<b>2021 State Total</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2022 State Total</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2023 State Total</b>
<b>Total unhoused</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>1801</b>	<b>319</b>	<b>1585</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>2178</b>
<b>% of state unhoused population</b>	13.5%		20.1%		12.1%	
<b>Ranking in state</b>	3 <sup>rd</sup>		2 <sup>nd</sup> (1 <sup>st</sup> community is Missoula with 20.5%)		3 <sup>rd</sup> (behind Billings and Missoula)	
<b>Unsheltered</b>	117	633	94	293	100	501
<b>Ranking in state</b>	1 <sup>st</sup>		1 <sup>st</sup>		2 <sup>nd</sup>	
<b>% of local unhoused population unsheltered</b>	48%		29.5%		38%	
<b>% of local unhoused families</b>	16%		18%		19%	
<b># local unhoused kids</b>	15 (6%)		33 (10%)		32 (12%)	
<b>% of local unhoused who are Veterans</b>	2%		15%		17.1%	
<b>Disabled</b>	25 (10%)		149 (47%)		148 (56%)	
<b>Chronic Homelessness</b>	Not Collected due to COVID		87 (27%)		84 (32%)	

## Needs and Gaps 2023

### General Observations:

Data for 2023 Point-in-time (PiT) Survey may have been impacted negatively by a 'letter' that was issued to the public by the local County Board of Commissioners. The 'letter' from the Flathead County Commissioners was released to the public and media on January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023. This was one week before the annual PiT Survey took place. The 'letter' called for the community to not support persons or organizations that assist the unhoused.

From 2019 to 2021, the demographic of unhoused, single adults has made up about 70% of the local unhoused population. In 2022, this demographic increased to over 83%, and, in 2023, was at 81% of the unhoused population. The number of chronically homeless adults had remained fairly consistent, ranging from 10-14% of the unhoused population based on recent (2018-2020) PiT data. Unfortunately, the 2022 PiT data demonstrated that the overall chronically homeless population nearly quadrupled in total number (87 in 2022 vs. 22 in 2020) and nearly doubled in percentage (27% in 2022 vs. 14% in 2020) of the overall unhoused population when compared to 2020 PiT. The percentage of chronically homeless folks increased to 32% of the total unhoused in 2023. This increase can be directly related to the reduction of mental health and/or case management services, and lack of appropriate housing options.

The PiT data from 2020-2023 illustrates that for the past 4 years that around 30-50% of the local unhoused population indicated they were unsheltered. The CAPNM service area had the highest number of unsheltered individuals in the state from 2019-2022. In 2023, Billings was the only community in the state to have more unsheltered than the Kalispell area. This creates a uniquely risky condition for those served in the area during cold weather months, especially for those that are chronically homeless and/or living with a disabling condition while experiencing homelessness.

Data from the 2023 PiT Survey shows that the Kalispell area has approximately 15% (ranks 3<sup>rd</sup>) of the homeless youth (ages 18-24), and the second highest number of young adults with children with nearly 24% of the statewide homeless youth demographic. While efforts to address homelessness for children and youth in the area have greatly increased, there continues to be a substantial number of local unhoused children according to current data from Coordinated Entry.

This area consistently has the one of the highest percentages (22%) of unhoused veterans in the entire state, and ranks only second to the Missoula area. The Volunteers of America, Veterans Inc., and Veterans Affairs are members of the local Continuum of Care, and have worked diligently to shelter and stabilize housing for dozens of veterans and their families just in the past two years.

Internally, Community Action Partnership of Northwest Montana (CAPNM) monitors the demographics of those who submit applications, and as the local lead with Coordinated Entry, CAPNM monitors information about those who end up on the By-Name List. Internal records have been reviewed and are consistent with the findings of the PiT count.

### Planning Steps:

Based upon the data from PiT and Coordinated Entry, what are the priority needs for this community and why?

- 1.) Need: Programs with eligibility that includes single, non-chronically unhoused persons. Households are typically single adults without dependent children. This is reflected with PiT data, internal tracking of applicants and utilization history for CoC RRH.
- 2.) Need: Increased access to shelter space, non-congregate shelter or alternative safe sleeping spaces. Households are more likely to be sleeping outside, in a vehicle or a place not meant for human habitation in Kalispell than in any other community in Montana.
- 3.) Need: People who are unhoused with a disability need access to appropriate mainstream services. The most dramatic number from the 2023 PiT was that 56% of our unhoused population were disabled. This is in stark contrast from the 2 years prior (2021) when only 10% of the unhoused population identified as disabled. CES data supports a need for programs that assist high-barrier, hard-to-serve individuals that need a wrap around support network and housing stabilization in order to maintain housing.
- 4.) Need: Crisis stabilization and behavioral health response and preventative measures (units/facilities and response teams)
- 5.) Need: The data now shows the number of unhoused youth (18-24 years old), with a total of 26 in the 2023 PiT survey. Unhoused Children comprised of a little over 12% of the local unhoused population in 2023, up from 6% in 2021 and 10% in 2022. In 2023, the greatest number of unhoused children are between 5-12 years old (same as 2022).

What steps will be taken to address homelessness and the priority needs?

- 1.) An immediate priority need is the increased available space at shelters or other safe, warm places due to the high number of unsheltered individuals. The Flathead Warming Center is a low-barrier, seasonal shelter and partner to CHS. Samaritan House, another local shelter that serves high-needs homeless folks, has plans approved by local officials to add more shelter space and beds to their Armory property. The Warming Center is able to provide a low-barrier shelter to typically high-barrier individuals from October through April, and was able to increase their shelter beds up from 40 to 50 during the 2022-23 season. The CHS is also looking at funding opportunities and existing infrastructures to be able to provide a day shelter, which has recently dissolved within our community. The goal will be to provide a safe, warm place during inclement weather and will also provide an opportunity to help individuals engage in services that support rapid re-housing. Each of these providers is a part of CHS and the local Coordinated Entry. Having supportive services on-site will increase connections to resources. Additionally, the Samaritan House has adjusted screening requirements to a more behavior-based model, and has also adjusted length of stay rules. Ongoing coordination of services with shelter providers has occurred since the beginning of the local coordinated entry system was established and has led to an increase in the usage of shelter space for those who are unsheltered. This happens in the form of day-to-day contact, referrals, and case conferencing. Shelter space and utilization is used as a match for the CoC programs.
- 2.) CAPNM will continue to coordinate the local CES system to help with the coordination of services for those experiencing homelessness with the on-going commitment to rapidly re-house households. Part of rapidly re-housing is working to engage a landlord base that is

receptive to working with those served in RRH programs as this area reportedly has a 0-1% vacancy rate.

- 3.) A priority need identified by CAPNM is to expand equitable access for RRH programs so that the largest unhoused population, single, non-chronically unhoused individuals, can access resources needed to stabilize housing. Historically CAPNM has exclusively provided CoC RRH services to households with dependent children and those fleeing domestic violence. Based upon the aforementioned observations from the PiT count, the agency has now modified eligible program participants to include single adults, as well as families with dependent children and those fleeing domestic violence or abuse. By widening the net of eligible participants, CAPNM can best help those experiencing a housing crisis.

CAPNM will incorporate additional structured instruction on renter education for all participants, with an emphasis on budgeting skills. Internal tracking of program participants indicates that most have experienced a trigger and/or traumatic event, leading to loss of housing. Through education and connection to mainstream resources, participants are given the tools to pave the way to self-sufficiency.

- 4.) According to recent CES data, there are a growing number of the unhoused population reporting one or more disabling conditions. Through CAPNM, Western Mental Health-PATH, ASSIST, and other service providers that have staff that SOAR's representative(s)/SSDI advocate(s) to help those who are unhoused and reporting a disabling condition in obtaining SSDI. CAPNM's Shelter Plus and YHDP programs work with CES to prioritize the most vulnerable individual's for permanent supportive housing.
- 5.) An additional priority need is addressing youth homelessness. The Sparrow's Nest is a community non-profit that assists with providing a safe place for teens to complete high school. The unhoused student liaison is also a critical player in helping address the priority needs of youth experiencing housing instability. School District 5 has established the HEART Locker to help provide resource information, clothing, toiletries and gas/motel vouchers at times. Another creative approach to this need, is that CAPNM has received a grant to provide free books to schools, which has increased our presence in areas where we previously had little involvement. Knowing that 5-12 years of age is the biggest segment of the unhoused children population, helps CAPNM isolate efforts for engaging the schools with their program options. Having the book grant helps cultivate relationships with schools in a way that had previously been limited to just interacting with the liaison.

Youth Homeless Demonstration projects operated by CAPNM and the HEART program will ensure that supportive services and permanent housing are oriented to address the needs of the expanding Transition-Aged Youth demographic (18-24). These projects aim to stably house, foster permanent connections, employment and training opportunities, benefits and resources.

- 6.) Early intervention when an individual experiences homelessness is a high priority, therefore CAPNM and CHS will continue to support and participate/ coordinate all area events targeted for the unhoused population (i.e. – Flathead Community Connect, Winter Warm Up). Over 900 people experiencing housing instability were served in this format last year. By having two annual events, it helps support quick intervention and speedier engagement with rapid re-housing services.