



SAN DIEGO
Regional Task Force
on Homelessness

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2022 Point in Time Count Data Released

Data shows progress and opportunities, provides insights into who is experiencing homelessness in San Diego County

SAN DIEGO – The Regional Task Force on Homelessness (RTFH) today released the topline results from the 2022 WeAllCount Point-in-Time Count, a one-day snapshot of the minimum number of San Diegans living in emergency shelters, transitional housing, safe havens and on our streets and along our riverbeds. Conducted on a cold and damp February morning, at the tail end of the Omicron COVID-19 wave, this count was completed thanks to the time and generosity of 1,400 volunteers across San Diego County.

The 2022 Point-in-Time Count was the first full count done by RTFH since January, 2020. With the 2020 data collected before the negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent increase in shelter options, comparisons between these two counts are not commensurable. Additionally, heavy rains the night before and frigid temperatures the morning of the count may have impacted the number of people sleeping outside. Despite all that, the trendlines between the two counts help provide a clearer picture of what homelessness looks like in our region.

Overall, the 2022 Point-in-Time Count found no less than 8,427 individuals experiencing homelessness across San Diego County, a 10% increase from 2020. It's critical to understand this is a minimum number. The challenges of finding every person in a car, canyon, or under a bridge, is impossible, but every effort is made to find and engage as many people as we can. This number includes 4,106 unsheltered San Diegans with 4,321 individuals in shelters. Of those surveyed, 85% said they had fallen into homelessness in our region.

"These data points give context to a crisis we already see with our own eyes," said Supervisor Terra Lawson-Remer, who represents the County of San Diego on RTFH's CoC Advisory Board. **"The homelessness crisis has changed a lot in two years, and with this information we can do a better job of providing the right kind of help based on people's unique problems, or better yet, make sure they never lose their home in the first place."**

"The latest numbers confirm what we all see and what we hear from members of our community every day – that our homelessness crisis is getting worse," said San Diego Council President Sean Elo-Rivera. **"We must take every opportunity, explore every idea and do all we can to house the unsheltered and prevent more San Diegans from falling into homelessness. Housing is a human right and we in positions of leadership have a moral obligation to make next year's Point in Time Count a demonstration of progress toward the realization of that right."**

"The Point-in-Time Count is about much more than numbers - it's about people," RTFH CEO Tamera Kohler said. **"Right now too many people are suffering in San Diego. They're mothers and daughters, fathers and sons. They fell into homelessness due to a lost job, a lost spouse or some other crisis beyond their control. Add in the fact that we live in the most expensive housing market in the country, where double digit rent increases are common, and you can see why too many San Diegans are left behind. The people our volunteers spoke to - from a senior with Alzheimer's sleeping in a tent, to a family sheltering in their car, to people with a full time job but not enough income to pay rent - aren't just numbers on a spreadsheet. They're our neighbors, doing their best to survive."**

There are bright spots, including a 30% decrease in the veteran homeless population and a 7% decrease in the chronic homelessness population versus 2020. We are heartened by these results because of the investment and resources our region has devoted to these subpopulations. Additionally, San Diego County saw an increase in transitional aged youth in shelter, ensuring easier access to permanent housing for that vulnerable population. Additional shelter options throughout the region also made a difference as well as a large housing effort in downtown San Diego housing roughly 150 San Diegans the week leading up to the count.

"The progress we've made on reducing veteran and chronic homelessness is heartening," RTFH Board Chair Ray Ellis said. **"Taking the lessons we've learned from working with these groups are so important to helping get more people off the street and into permanent housing."**

The Point-in-Time Count also brought into focus some concerning trends in our homeless population: 2022 saw an increase in families experiencing homelessness, up 56% from 2020. Black San Diegans, who make up under 5% of the total population in San Diego County, made up 24% of the region's unsheltered homeless population. While 24% of San Diegans experiencing homelessness were over 55 in both 2020 and 2022, this year's count showed 47% of those seniors were experiencing homelessness for the first time, with 57% having a physical disability.

The oldest person surveyed living on the street in San Diego County was 87.

“This data tells us where we need the most attention, right now, to make an impact,” RTFH CoC Advisory Board Chair Sean Spear said. “Whether it’s Black San Diegans, seniors or other groups who are increasingly experiencing homelessness, we must increase our efforts to reverse these trend lines.”

Overall, the Point-in-Time Count provides much needed context about who’s sleeping outside and what their challenges are.

Sarah Hutmacher, Chief Associate Director for the San Diego River Park Foundation and Point-in-Time Count volunteer, [said in a new video about this year’s count](#): “I’m often surprised by people that are putting their dress shirts on to go to work from a tent, under a freeway. The more you listen, the more you find ways that you can relate.”

While the Point-in-Time Count is an important factor in understanding who is experiencing homelessness in San Diego, RTFH works year round to collect actionable data.

“This is a snapshot of what homelessness looks like in our region,” Kohler said. “That’s why the data we collect every day and every month is so valuable to the work we do. It’s how we know that from October 1, 2020 through September 30, 2021, more than 36,500 San Diegans interacted with homeless services. Having a better understanding of what we’re up against allows us to better serve those in need. With a human-centric approach that increases shelter options around the region, more permanent support housing throughout San Diego County, and dedicated outreach that meets people where they are - while also helping to keep people in their homes so they don’t end up on the street - we can make a real difference.”

Kohler is available for interviews related to the Point-in-Time Count. Please reach out to Jordan Beane, Director of Policy and Communications at Jordan.Beane@rtfhdsd.org or call 858-221-3975 for more information.

The Regional Task Force on Homelessness (RTFH) has evolved from an initial Mayor’s Task Force nearly forty 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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