HUB for **URBAN INITIATIVES**

BRIEFS AND REPORTS

How Many Persons Became Homeless for the First Time During the Past 12 Months?
Part I

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"Did you become homeless for the first time during the past 12 months?" was a question added to the 2017 homeless count and survey instrument for unsheltered adults and unaccompanied children under age 18 for the Southern California counties of San Bernardino and Ventura.

The total number of unsheltered adults who became homeless for the first time during the 12 months prior to the homeless counts is as follows:

- 37.1% or 428 of the 1,153 unsheltered adults and unaccompanied children under age 18 in San Bernardino County; and
- 26.2% or 167 of the 637 unsheltered adults and unaccompanied children under age 18 in Ventura County.

Urban Initiatives helped design the count and survey instrument for both counties. The instrument included the questions necessary to meet the total population and subpopulation requirements by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Any jurisdictions, such as the counties of San Bernardino and Ventura, that receive

annual Continuum of Care (CoC) Program funding, must complete a sheltered count every year and an unsheltered count every other year during the last 10 days of January.

The total population count must include the number of persons counted as sheltered and unsheltered. Subpopulation counts must include the number of persons who were adults with a serious mental illness, adults with a substance use disorder, adults with HIV/AIDS, chronically homeless families, chronically homeless individuals, unaccompanied children under age 18, unaccompanied young adults age 18 - 24, veterans, and victims of domestic violence (optional). A breakdown by gender, ethnicity, and race is also required.

Other questions were included in the count and survey instrument for unsheltered adults and unaccompanied children under age 18 that were not required by HUD, including the question---"Did you become homeless for the first time during the past 12 months." The purpose of this question was to find out how many unsheltered adults and unaccompanied children under age 18 became homeless for the first time during the 12 months prior to the 2017 homeless counts. The question also aimed at further identifying who these persons were and determining their service needs.

The following table provides the total number of unsheltered adults and unaccompanied children under age 18 who became homeless for the first time during the 12 months prior to the 2017 homeless counts and a breakdown of the total number by subpopulations that include some subpopulations not required by HUD. The breakdown for several subpopulations will also help identify conditions and issues that likely contributed to their homelessness such as adults with a chronic health condition, physical disability, serious mental illness, substance use disorder, and with HIV/AIDS. Other issues and conditions include domestic violence, recent release from jail or prison, and little or no monthly income.

Who Became Homeless for the First Time During the Past 12 Months?

For both counties,

- More than two-thirds of persons were 40 years of age or older;
- More than two-thirds of persons were male; and
- Approximately 10% stated that they were veterans.

Conditions and Issues That Likely Contributed to First Time Experience of Homelessness

Table 1 notes that that the following conditions and issues likely contributed to their first time experience of homelessness for both counties:

- Approximately half (50%) of unsheltered respondents reported no income;
- More than one-third of unsheltered respondents reported a chronic health

condition;

- More than one-third of unsheltered respondents reported a physical disability;
- More than one-fourth of unsheltered respondents reported being released from prison during the past two years after serving a court-ordered sentence; and
- Nearly one-fourth of unsheltered respondents reported a mental health problem.

Other conditions and issues that likely contributed to their first time experience of homelessness are also noted in Table 1.

Service Needs for Those Who Became Homeless for the First Time

Table 1 also provides information regarding the service needs of those persons who became homeless for the first time during the 12 months prior to the 2017 homeless count and survey.

Besides Housing, service needs included:

- Health care;
- Mental health care;
- Substance use counseling and treatment; and
- Domestic violence counseling.

Table 1. Unsheltered adults who became homeless for the first time during the 12 months prior to the homeless counts

	San Bernardino County		Ventura County	
	#	%	#	%
Total Number:	428	100	167	100
Age:				
Under 18 (unaccompanied children)	9	2.1	0	0.0
18 - 24	40	9.3	10	6.0
25 - 39	112	26.2	43	25.7
40 - 49	87	20.3	35	21.0
50 - 61	138	32.2	57	34.1
62+	24	5.6	18	10.8
No Recorded Answer	18	4.2	4	2.4
Disability or Disabling Condition:				
Chronic Health Condition	163	38.1	64	38.3
Developmental	78	18.2	33	19.8
HIV/AIDS	10	2.3	1	0.6
Mental Health Problem	98	22.9	33	19.8
Physical	161	37.6	53	31.7
Substance Use	120	28.0	39	23.4
Domestic Violence:				
Survivor	92	22.0	40	24.0
Ethnicity:				
Hispanic or Latino	126	29.4	74	44.3
Gender:				
Female	121	28.3	44	26.3
Male	300	70.1	119	71.3
Transgender	0	0.0	1	0.6
Did Not Identify as Female, Male, or Transgender	1	0.2	0	0.0
No Recorded Answer	6	1.4	3	1.8
Jail or Prison:				
Released During Past 12 Months	114	26.6	52	31.1
Monthly Income:				
No Income	197	46.0	87	52.1
$1 - $250	44	10.3	21	12.6
$251 - $500	22	5.1	6	3.6
$501 - $1,000	61	14.3	28	16.8
$1,000+	14	3.3	13	7.8
No Recorded Answer	90	21.0	12	7.2
Race:				
African American or Black	71	16.6	11	6.6
American Indian or Alaskan Native	4	0.9	4	2.4
Asian	2	0.5	1	0.6
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	6	1.4	2	1.2
White	165	38.6	90	53.9
Multiple Races or Other	44	10.3	31	18.6
Don't Know or Refused to Answer	5	1.2	5	3.0
No Recorded Answer	131	30.5	23	13.8
Veteran Status:				
Veteran	45	10.5	14	8.4