

Project Homeless Connect: Milwaukee



**PROJECT
HOMELESS
CONNECT
MILWAUKEE COUNTY**

Homelessness in Milwaukee

In 2011, Milwaukee participated in the biennial Point-In-Time count. This census is required by HUD as a way to measure the progress communities make while working on the issue of homelessness. The Point-In-Time count always occurs on a single night in the last week of January, and in 2011 took place on January 26th. On that night, Milwaukee had a total of 1,466 adults and children who were homeless. The following information was gathered and compiled in the report, “2011 Point in Time Survey of Milwaukee’s Homeless Citizens.”

AGE

<i>Age</i>	<i>Percent</i>
18 years or under	3%
19-30 years	21%
31-40 years	17%
41-50 years	30%
51-60 years	26%
61 years or over	4%

Homeless adults tended to be middle-aged. The number of homeless adults drops dramatically at age 61, with only 4% falling in this category.

RACE AND ETHNIC ORIGIN

<i>Race and Ethnic Origin</i>	<i>Percent</i>
African American	63%
Asian	1%
Native American	2%
Mixed Race	5%
Caucasian	25%
Hispanic/Latino	4%
Other	4.6%

The majority of homeless adults were African American, followed by Caucasian.

GENDER

<i>Gender</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Male	58%
Female	42%

VETERAN STATUS

<i>Veteran Status</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Veteran	20%
Not a Veteran	80%

In 2011, 1 in 5 homeless adults identified themselves as a vet. This is a slight increase over 2009.

Intake Data from Project Homeless Connect

Use of HMIS for Data Collection and Reporting:

The Project Homeless Connect planning committee determined that the best method for data collection and reporting would be to use the existing HMIS database. To facilitate this process, the Milwaukee Continuum of Care (CoC) HMIS Coordinator tailored the intake templates used at the 2010 Project Homeless Connect (PHC) event. Consumer notices were posted throughout the intake room to meet state requirements for data entry into the HMIS database. Following the event, the HMIS Coordinator entered the data into a specially designed PHC assessment to record the data collected. A service transaction of “Multi-Purpose Center” and a program entry/exit were entered for each guest to generate a variety of reports.

Source of Referral to Project Homeless Connect Event:

The Milwaukee Continuum of Care’s Second Annual PHC served 239 total guests. Guests were invited to the event through a variety of different avenues. The planning committee’s intent was to broadly advertise the event to both homeless service providers and to programs that assist clients at risk of homelessness. Announcements were made to Homeless Service Providers at CoC meetings, Transitional Housing Program meetings and Shelter Task Force meetings. Fliers were also distributed to various meal sites. 100% of the guests resided within the City of Milwaukee limits.

<i>Source of referral</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing or Permanent Housing Case Manager	122	51%
Meal site	40	17%
Friends/Relatives	30	13%
Police	10	4%
Churches	8	3%
Other sources – W2 office, FSET, UMOS, Walk-in, posted flyers	29	12%

Age:

By gender, 74% of those served were male (178) and 26% were female (61). This is significantly different when compared to the 2010 event where only 63% of the guests served were male. Over half of the clients served fell into the 31-50 years age range. There was an increase in the percentage of males aged 51-61 served and a decrease in the percentage of females aged 31-50 that were served in 2011.

<i>Age Range:</i>	<i>13-17</i>	<i>18-30</i>	<i>31-50</i>	<i>51-61</i>	<i>62+</i>
Males	.05%	10%	32%	29%	3%
Females	0%	8%	11%	6%	1%

Race and Ethnicity:

In terms of Ethnicity, 8% of the clients served were Hispanic. This is slightly higher than what was found in the 2011 PIT count where 4% of the clients counted were Hispanic.

<i>Race</i>	<i>Hispanic/Latino</i>	<i>Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino</i>	<i>Percent</i>
American Indian or Alaska Native	0	2	1%
Asian	0	0	0%
Black or African American	0	167	69%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0	1	1%
White	18	69	29%
Total	18	239	8%

Veteran Status:

Of the 239 clients served, 20, or 8%, indicated that they were veterans. Note that this number is lower than the 20% reported in the 2011 PIT survey.

Household Status:

Guests were asked to self-identify their household type. Average family size for guests who reported having minor dependents was 3.03 total family members.

<i>Household Type</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Single adult, no children	209	87%
Female single parent	16	7%
Male single parent	10	4%
Couple with no children	4	2%

Current Living Situation:

PHC was geared towards homeless clients and guests at risk of homelessness. Of the 239 clients served, 49, or 21%, were added to the HMIS database as new clients. This is comparable to the 2010 event. According to the HUD definition a homeless person is someone living in an emergency shelter, safe haven, transitional housing, or a place not meant for human habitation. A total of 172 guests (72%) served at PHC met this definition. The remaining 67 guests (28%) may have been doubled up or at risk of homelessness.

<i>Current Living Situation</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Emergency Shelter	114	48%
Place not meant for human habitation	47	20%
Friends	26	11%
Family	16	7%

Permanent Supportive Housing	13	5%
Rental apartment or house	11	4%
Transitional housing	8	3%
Safe Haven	3	1%
Substance abuse facility	1	1%

Length of homelessness:

Of the 239 guests served, 54 clients reported that they were not homeless at the time of the event (23%). The remaining 185 clients were homeless and the length of their current homeless situation is reported below.

<i>Length of stay in current situation</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
One week or less	35	19%
More than a week but less than a month	50	27%
One to three months	45	24%
More than three months, but less than one year	33	18%
One year or longer	22	12%

Primary Reason for Homelessness:

<i>Primary Reason for Homelessness</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Addiction	3	1%
Can't find affordable housing	6	2%
Eviction	12	5%

Family/Domestic Violence	7	3%
Family/Personal Illness/Injury	1	1%
Jail/Prison - Criminal history	2	1%
Lifestyle Preference/Transient	2	1%
Low or no income	35	15%
Moved	6	2%
Needs Better Environment	1	1%
Physical/Mental Disabilities	13	5%
Roommate or family conflict	13	5%
Unable to Pay Rent/Mortgage	2	1%
Unemployment	64	27%
No Response/Other	72	30%

Disability Information:

The PHC intake form for 2011 asked “Do you have a disability of Long Duration” and allowed the guest to self-report this information. 122 clients reported a disability of some kind. The disability percentages listed below were gathered using a combination of self-report data and data that exists already in the local HMIS database. It is significant to note that guests can experience multiple disability issues simultaneously; therefore, the chart below is only de-duplicated within each category and not throughout.

<i>Long Term Disability</i>	<i>Clients Served</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Alcohol Abuse	25	10%
Developmental	8	3%
Drug Abuse	19	8%

HIV/AIDS	1	1%
Mental Health Problem	63	26%
Physical	72	30%

Employment Status:

The most common reason for homelessness given by guests was “unemployment” and this directly correlates with the employment status of the guests who attended PHC.

<i>Employment Status</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Full Time	3	1%
Part Time	18	8%
Not a Workforce Participant/Not Job Ready	3	1%
Unemployed and Seeking Work	208	87%
Unemployed and not seeking work	7	3%

Non-Cash Benefits:

Only 12% of guests reported that they received no mainstream (non-cash benefit) resources. This is the same as reported in 2010. The most prominent resource is Food Share, which is reported by 81% of clients. It is significant to note that only 9 of the 20 Veterans served (43%) were connected with VA medical services.

<i>Mainstream Resources</i>	<i>Unduplicated Count</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Food Share	193	81%

Badgercare (Singles)	28	12%
Medicaid	49	21%
Medicare	26	11%
BadgerCare (Families)	13	5%
VA Medical	9	4%
None Reported	27	12%

Income Sources:

Approximately 62% of the clients served had no source of cash income. This is much higher than the 47% reported in 2010. Note that clients may fall into more than one income category; therefore, percentages may be higher than 100%, and counts may be more than the total number of guests.

<i>Income Sources</i>	<i>Unduplicated Count</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Child Support	3	1%
Earned Income	21	9%
No income	148	62%
Non-Service Connected Disability	4	2%
Retirement Income From Social Security	1	1%
SSDI	37	15%
SSI	21	9%
TANF	11	5%
Unemployment Insurance	9	4%

Veteran's Pension	2	1%
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Chronically Homeless Client Information:

Separate analysis was done for the 19 clients (8%) who met the HUD definition for chronically homeless. According to HUD, a chronically homeless person is an unaccompanied homeless individual with a disabling condition or a family with a disabled adult who has been homeless continually for a full year or four or more times in three years:

- 18 clients were male, and 1 was female; all were single adults
- 84% were Black or African American and 16% were White.
- 1 clients was a veterans
- 68% stayed the prior night in an emergency shelter and 32% stayed the prior night in a place not meant for human habitation

Clients “New” to HMIS:

Separate analysis was done for clients who were newly added to the HMIS database following their participation at the 2011 Project Homeless Connect event.

- 49 new clients were added to the database
- 15 of the guests (31%) were female and 34 of the guests (69%) were male
- Racially, 37% were White; 59% were Black or African American and 4% were other
- 5 of the guests (10%) were veterans

<i>Current Living Situation</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Emergency Shelter	5	10%
Place not meant for human habitation	13	27%
Rental Apartment	6	12%
Friends/Family	24	49%
Save Haven	1	2%

“Repeat Clients:”

Twelve (12) clients attended the PHC event in both 2010 and 2011.

- 83% were single adults, 17% were part of single parent families
- 50% clients were on the streets; one has since found permanent housing
- 33% were in their own rental at the time of the second event and the remaining clients were in emergency shelter
- One client was a veteran
- 67% reported a disability.

Services Information:

For the second PHC event Intake staff attempted to capture information about which services the guest wanted to access, and subsequently, keep track of the actual services the guest received. Again this process was not as successful as hoped and instead information could only be gathered about the services that each guest requested. Note that each guest could request as many services as he/she desired, so the totals and percentages are higher than the total number of guests served.

<i>Resource Requested</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Hygiene Bank/Snack Bags	167	70%
Clothing Bank	164	67%
Lunch	130	54%
Resource Fair	119	50%
Dental Assessment	108	45%
Haircut	66	28%
Birth Certificate Assistance	64	27%
211 Impact	63	26%

Portraits and Interviews	61	26%
Health Screening	60	25%
Badgercare/Foodshare Application	58	24%
Employment Handouts	51	21%
Healthcare Coverage Info	49	20%
Employment Workshop Interview Skills	49	20%
Justice 2000 Screening	47	30%
Social Security Assistance	37	15%
Employment Workshop Resume/Cover Letter Writing	37	15%
Legal Consultation	32	13%
Employment Workshop Using the Internet to Job Search	30	12%
HIV/STD Testing	27	11%
PATH Outreach	25	10%
Banking/Credit 101	22	9%
Dry Hootch for Veteran's	5	2%

Unfortunately, guests requested several services that were not available at the 2011 event. This included Vision Screenings (requested by 61 guests) as the vendor was unable to attend the event.

Guests and volunteers recorded a number of suggestions to improve the event for 2012. These suggestions included:

- Improving the job fair – 41
- Increasing the availability of men's clothing, outerwear and socks – 22
- Providing juice and/or soda at lunch – 7
- Lengthening the event to allow the guests more time at each service area – 6
- Providing better/additional housing placement resources – 5
- Providing clients with bus tickets to get to and from the event and for work search – 5
- Assuring that wheelchairs are available for the disabled guests – 3

Intake

One of the most important pieces to successful data collection is the design of the intake form and the intake process. For the 2011 event, the PHC team modified the 2010 intake form to include additional questions and to streamline the intake process. The intake process was altered in an effort to ensure more accurate data collection. Rather than having general PHC volunteers complete the intake forms, the intakes were completed by hand selected Intake Specialists who have experience in homeless intake for various housing programs.

Additionally, improvements were made to the cash and non cash benefits sections and to the collection of disability information. These changes were received positively by guests and aided in the data analysis process.

Data Entry

A specialized assessment was created in the HMIS database to facilitate data entry. This allowed for ease in reporting for the 2011 PHC event. HMIS Coordination staff will continue to work on improving the work flow of the data entry process.