



Single Night Count of People Experiencing Homelessness

2023 Minnesota Homeless Study Counts Fact Sheet

Every three years,¹ Wilder Research conducts a one-day statewide study to better understand the prevalence of homelessness in Minnesota, as well as the circumstances of those experiencing homelessness. The most recent study took place on October 26, 2023, and included two components that captured information on that date: 1) face-to-face interviews with people who meet the [federal definition of homelessness](#), and 2) a count of people experiencing homelessness.

This report contains counts data from the 2023 Minnesota Homeless Study and Reservation Homeless Study, including those:

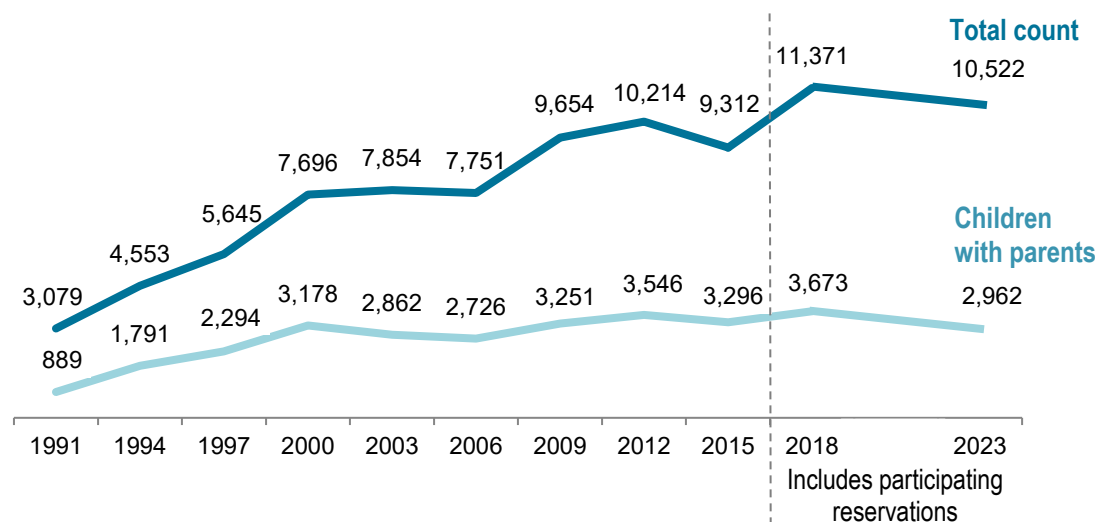
- *In shelter*: People staying in all known emergency shelters, domestic violence shelters, transitional housing sites, and hotels/motels for which they receive a voucher.
- *Not in a formal shelter*: People staying outside, on transit, or temporarily doubled up, and identified through interviews in outreach locations such as encampments and other drop-in sites.

Six tribes in Minnesota partnered with Wilder Research to conduct the 2023 Reservation Homeless Study. This study took place during a similar time period as the Minnesota Homeless Study, and honors tribal ownership of their data. With permission from participating tribes (Bois Forte, Fond du Lac, Leech Lake, Mille Lacs, Red Lake, and White Earth), Wilder Research combined reservation counts with statewide counts to get a more complete number of people experiencing homelessness in Minnesota.

10,522 people experienced homelessness in Minnesota on a single night in 2023.

- Overall, this number represents a decrease of 7% since the 2018 study.
- It is important to note that this decrease masks year-over-year fluctuations in homelessness, particularly due to the COVID-19 pandemic and unprecedented funding for rental and housing assistance.

ONE-NIGHT STUDY COUNTS OF THE MINNESOTA HOMELESS POPULATION, 1991-2023



¹ The study was postponed for two years due to the COVID-19 pandemic; therefore, it has been five years since the previous study in 2018.

Fewer children and youth are experiencing homelessness. However, the number of older adults (age 55+) experiencing homelessness has increased.

- Since 2018, there was a 19% decrease in the number of children who were homeless with their parents.
- There was a 17% decrease in the number of homeless youth (age 24 and younger) on their own without their parents.
- Older adults (age 55+) were the only age group that saw an increase over 2018 (7%). Although older adults are a growing group of people experiencing homelessness, they are still least likely to be homeless compared to their numbers in the overall population of Minnesotans.

2018 AND 2023 COUNTS BY AGE GROUP

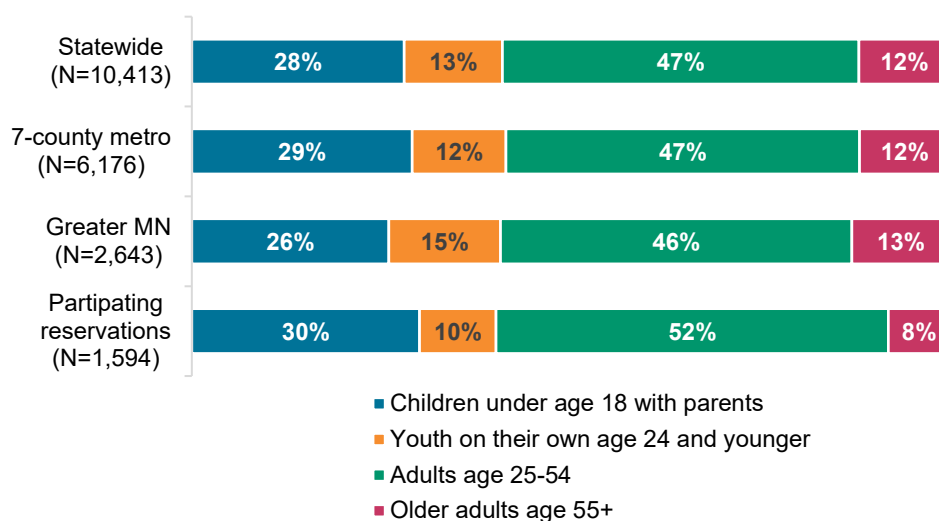
	2018 study	2023 study	% change (2018-2023)
Children under age 18 with parents	3,673	2,962	-19% ↓
Youth on their own age 24 and younger	1,587	1,315	-17% ↓
Adults age 25-54	4,934	4,932	<1% ↔
Older adults age 55+	1,129	1,204	+7% ↑
Total^a	11,371	10,522	-7% ↓

^a Total includes the number of people who were in detox and homeless on the night of the study (N=27), as well as those people whose ages were unknown (N=82).

Children and youth make up a sizeable proportion of the homeless population.

- Together, children and youth (age 24 and younger) account for 4 out of every 10 people experiencing homelessness.
- The age distribution of people experiencing homelessness is similar for the 7-county Twin Cities metro, greater Minnesota, and participating reservations.

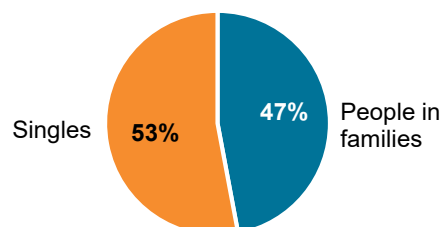
AGES OF PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS, BY GEOGRAPHY



Families make up nearly half of Minnesota's homeless population.

- People in families (with children under 18) account for 47% of people experiencing homelessness in Minnesota.
- The proportion of families is slightly higher in the Twin Cities metro (48%) than it is in greater Minnesota (41%).

PEOPLE IN FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN AND SINGLES EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

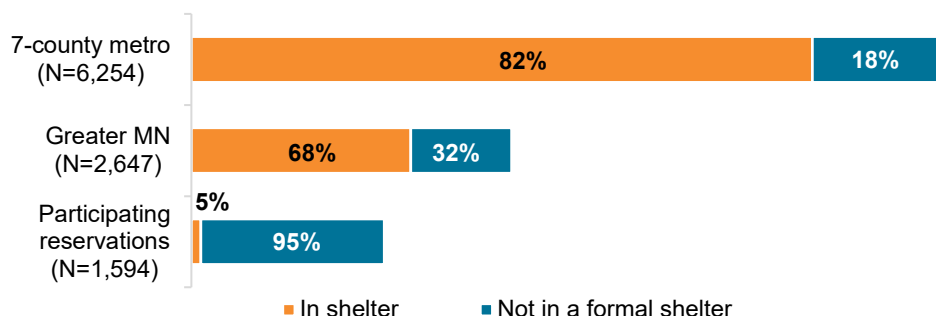


Across the state, one-third of people experiencing homelessness are not in a formal shelter.

It is impossible to identify all people experiencing homelessness who are not in a formal shelter.² These numbers can be affected by variations in outreach efforts and the visibility of the population.

- Overall, 33% of people experiencing homelessness in Minnesota are not in a formal shelter. There was a smaller proportion of people not in a formal shelter in the Twin Cities metro (18%), compared to greater Minnesota (32%) and participating reservations (95%) where there are fewer shelters available.

PEOPLE LIVING IN SHELTER VERSUS NOT IN A FORMAL SHELTER, BY GEOGRAPHY



What's next?

Beginning in May 2024, Wilder will report findings from thousands of face-to-face interviews conducted throughout Minnesota, plus:

- Data tables for each interview question, for every region of the state.
- Findings from the Reservation Homeless Study.
- Specialized briefings on smaller sub-groups such as homeless youth, Veterans, older adults, families, and long-term homeless populations.

² Not in a formal shelter: People staying outside, on transit, or temporarily doubled up, and identified through interviews in outreach locations such as encampments and other drop-in sites.

Explanation of 2023 data

The findings above are based on the 2023 Minnesota Homeless Study counts data. Counts data include: 1) a count of all shelter guests either identified through HMIS data (for shelters reporting to HMIS) or from Wilder-collected data (for shelters not reporting to HMIS), and 2) a count of all interviews conducted with people not in a formal shelter. Because a single night count and interviews can never fully identify all people experiencing homelessness who are not using shelters, the numbers represented in this fact sheet should be considered a minimum count. Please visit mnhomeless.org for detailed statewide and regional reports which break down the counts data by shelter types, age, gender, race, and family status.

With permission from participating tribes (Bois Forte, Fond du Lac, Leech Lake, Mille Lacs, Red Lake, and White Earth), Wilder Research combined reservation counts with the statewide counts to get a more complete number of people experiencing homelessness in Minnesota. This is the first time researchers requested permission to present this more complete count in this overall counts fact sheet (permission was granted for 2018 data after its publication). Since the first Reservation Homeless Study in 2006, data have been analyzed and aggregated separately, guided by principles of data sovereignty. Therefore, please note this change when making comparisons to pre-2018 counts.

Additional resources on homelessness in Minnesota

Wilder's Minnesota Homeless Study is considered the most comprehensive source of descriptive information about homeless adults, youth, and children in Minnesota. It is not intended to be a complete count because no study strategy can locate all people experiencing homelessness. Other sources of information that complement our understanding of homelessness include:

- An annual January point in time (PIT) count of persons living in shelters, outdoors, and in places not meant for habitation. This count is required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).
- The Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), which includes client information compiled by all providers of federal- and state-funded emergency shelter and supportive housing programming.

Together, these sources are used nationwide to inform federal, state, and local policies to prevent and end homelessness.

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The study is an independent initiative of Wilder Research in partnership with public and private funders and in-kind support from service providers throughout the state. Study co-directors: Michelle Decker Gerrard and Rebecca Sales.

For more information about this report, call Wilder Research, 651-280-2700, or visit mnhomeless.org.

MARCH 2024

Homelessness in the Twin Cities and Greater Minnesota

**How do people experience homelessness
differently across the state?**



Homelessness is a result of multiple system failures. This includes a profound shortage of housing for people with extremely low incomes, as well as inadequate systems to support complex, interrelated needs. In addition to a lack of housing, homelessness can be caused and sustained by trauma, systemic racism, unemployment, or personal health challenges. As a result, homelessness is different for every person who experiences it.

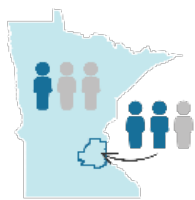
Geography also plays an important role in homelessness. People who are homeless in a large, urban setting enter and experience homelessness differently than those living in areas that are farther from an urban center. This brief explores the ways in which homelessness is different between the Twin Cities metropolitan area and greater Minnesota.

Issue Brief

This brief is part of a series that examines interview data from the 2023 Minnesota Homeless Study. Each report will explore a specific aspect of homelessness and provide detailed data that can be used to inform services, interventions, and policies across our state.

For all available results from the study, as well as the Reservation Homeless Study, visit mnhomeless.org.

Key findings



In Minnesota, two-thirds of people experiencing homelessness are in the Twin Cities metro and one-third live in greater Minnesota.¹



There is an alarming overrepresentation of Native American, Black, and Hispanic/Latino people experiencing homelessness in both the Twin Cities metro and greater Minnesota.



Across the state, a concerning number of people are spending most of their time unsheltered. People who are homeless in greater Minnesota are more precariously sheltered, spending more time doubled up, more often moving from place to place for shelter, and experiencing more repeat episodes of homelessness.



While more people experience homelessness in the Twin Cities metro, those who are homeless in greater Minnesota have higher rates of complex challenges that perpetuate the cycle of homelessness, including trauma, violence, and significant health issues.



Lack of affordable housing for very low-income people remains a top challenge to finding housing, both in greater Minnesota and the Twin Cities metro.

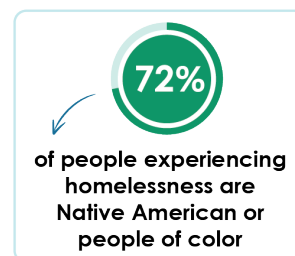
¹ The Twin Cities metro, including the cities of Minneapolis and Saint Paul, is comprised of seven counties: Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott, and Washington. For this analysis, we define greater Minnesota as all other counties outside of the 7-county metro.

There are severe racial disparities within Minnesota's homeless population.

Systemic racism, including a history of genocide, slavery, segregation, and anti-Black and Brown policies, has created huge racial disparities in wealth and homeownership in our country. Discriminatory policies have inhibited generations of African American and Native American people from building wealth, resulting in severe inequalities within the homeless population.

Although Minnesota's adult population is overwhelmingly White (80%),² just over one-third of the adult population experiencing homelessness in Minnesota identify as White (38%; Figure 1).

Shockingly high proportions of people experiencing homelessness (relative to their population size in Minnesota) identify as Native American, Black, or Hispanic/Latino. The disproportion is especially high in the Twin Cities metro where more than three-quarters (77%) of people experiencing homelessness identify as a person of color, and nearly half the homeless population identifies as Black (45%).



In greater Minnesota, a quarter of the homeless population identifies as Native American (24%), and nearly all people interviewed through the Reservation Homeless Study were Native American (97%). Note that this is the only place where tribal interview data are used in this brief. See *About the Study* for more information on the Reservation Homeless Study.

1. Racial and ethnic identities of Minnesota adults experiencing homelessness

	Statewide (N=6,934)	Twin Cities Metro (N=4,200)	Greater Minnesota (N=1,827)	Participating Reservations (N=907) ^a
White	38%	33%	66%	5%
Black or African American	32%	45%	17%	1%
Hispanic or Latino	15%	20%	10%	3%
Asian	3%	4%	2%	0%
Native American	30%	18%	24%	97%
Unknown	2%	2%	1%	0%
Native American or people of color (includes those who identify as 2 or more groups)	72%	77%	48%	98%

Source. 2023 Minnesota Homeless Study interviews.

Note. Respondents could choose more than one racial or ethnic identity.

^a These data are from the 2023 Reservation Homeless Study, with permission from participating tribes.

Like systemic racism, homelessness has traumatic impacts that are passed down through generations, further perpetuating a cycle of homelessness for Native Americans and people of color. For example, more than half (51%) of people experiencing homelessness in Minnesota were first homeless as a child or youth, 24 or younger; 29% were first homeless as a child under 18 years old. Proportions are similar between people experiencing homelessness in the Twin Cities and greater Minnesota.

² U.S. Census Bureau. (2022). *Population Estimates Program 2022 Vintage*. Retrieved February 2024, from www.census.gov/programs-surveys/popest.html

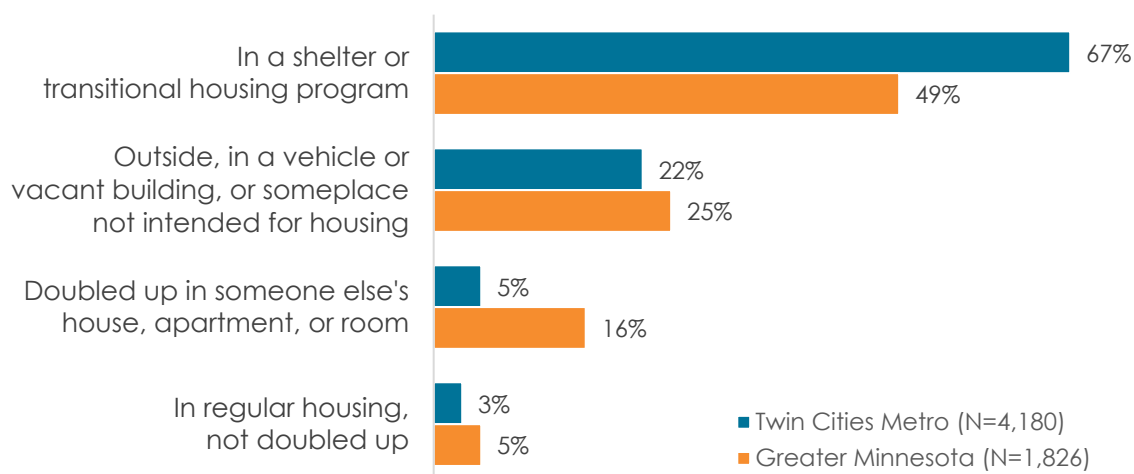
People face precarious shelter options, especially in greater Minnesota.

In both the Twin Cities metro and greater Minnesota, there is a concerning number of people spending most of their time unsheltered. Nearly one-quarter of the homeless population has spent at least half of the previous month unsheltered (outside, in encampments, etc.). Rates are similar between greater Minnesota (25%) and the Twin Cities metro (22%; Figure 2).

On top of this, people experiencing homelessness in greater Minnesota are more likely to:

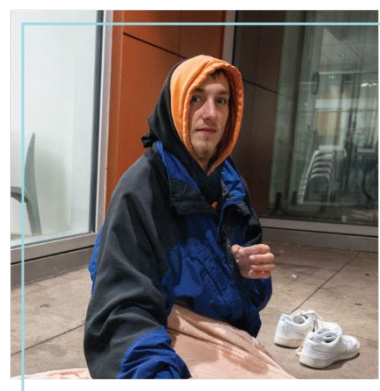
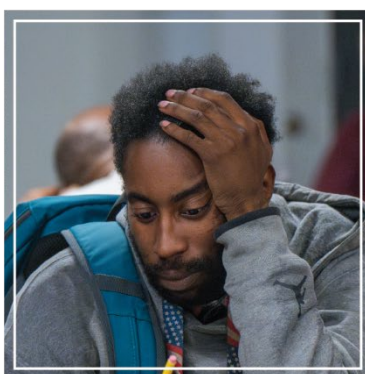
- Be doubled up, as opposed to staying in a formal shelter
- Move from one place to another in a 60-day period
- Be homeless multiple times in their life

2. Sleeping situation 15+ days out of the month



Source. 2023 Minnesota Homeless Study interviews.

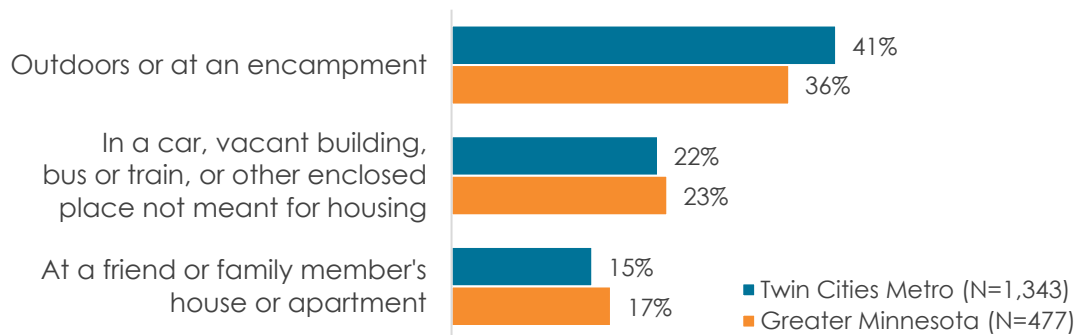
Note. 3-5% of respondents were in "some other type of place." Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.



Within the previous three month period, one-third of homeless adults had been turned away from a shelter, more so in the Twin Cities metro (35%) than in greater Minnesota (28%). When people are turned away from shelter, the majority have to stay outside, in their car, or on transit (Figure 3). Even if shelter beds are available on a given night, they may not meet the needs of the person seeking shelter. Capacity is a complex puzzle that means having enough beds at the right place and the right time, with adequate staff to provide resources and supports.



3. Top 3 locations slept at after being turned away from a shelter



Source. 2023 Minnesota Homeless Study interviews

The lack of shelter beds is critical, as seen in the [national debate](#) related to criminalizing camping on public property and the *City of Grants Pass, Oregon v. Johnson* Supreme Court case.

The National Coalition for the Homeless, which “has documented nearly 2,000 incidents of violence against people who were homeless” over the past 23 years, reports an increase on attacks against people experiencing homelessness. They draw a direct connection between recent legislation and “vigilantism and hatred directed towards people who are forced to live outdoors” (2024).³

It is important to focus policies on decreasing violence against people experiencing homelessness (which is already too high, as discussed in the next section) to help break the compounding factors that perpetuate homelessness.



³ National Coalition for the Homeless. (2024). *Criminalization has consequences*. <https://nationalhomeless.org/criminalization-has-consequences/>

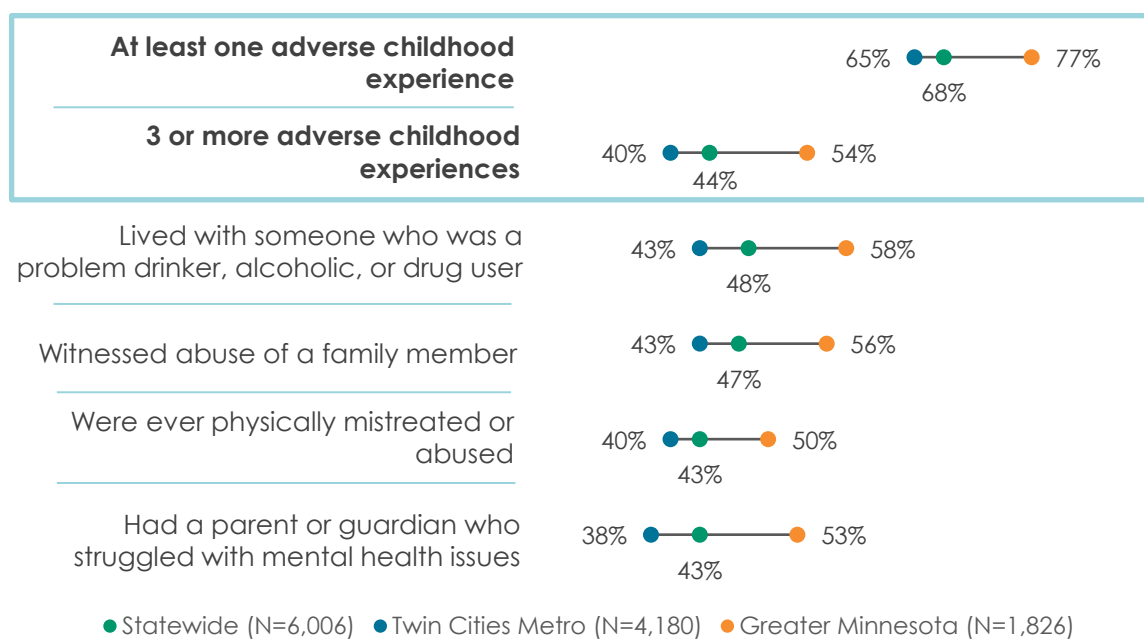
Experience with trauma and violence is higher in greater Minnesota.

Homelessness can be caused and exacerbated by trauma. Adverse childhood experiences refer to potentially traumatic experiences during childhood, like abuse or neglect. As a whole, over two-thirds (68%) of people who are homeless in Minnesota have experienced trauma as a child.

People experiencing homelessness in greater Minnesota are more likely to have at least one adverse childhood experience (77%, compared to 65% in the Twin Cities metro; Figure 4). People most often reported a childhood experience of:

- Living with someone who used substances
- Witnessing abuse of a family member
- Being physically mistreated or abused
- Having a parent or guardian who struggled with mental health issues

4. Adverse childhood experiences among Minnesota adults experiencing homelessness



Source. 2023 Minnesota Homeless Study interviews

Note. This chart includes the top four (out of seven) adverse childhood experiences asked about in the Minnesota Homeless Study. The study itself does not include a comprehensive list of adverse childhood experiences, and question wording differs slightly from the Family Health History questionnaire used in the 1998 CDC-Kaiser Permanente Adverse Childhood Experiences Study.

Experiences of violence are also higher in greater Minnesota (59%), compared to the Twin Cities metro (52%; Figure 5). In particular, people stayed in an abusive situation because there were no other housing options (46% in greater Minnesota, compared to 36% in the Twin Cities metro). Rates of other violent experiences—being attacked or assaulted while homeless (35% statewide) and fleeing domestic violence (22% statewide)—were similar between the Twin Cities metro and greater Minnesota.

5. Experienced violence while homeless



Statewide
(N=6,006)



Twin Cities Metro
(N=4,180)



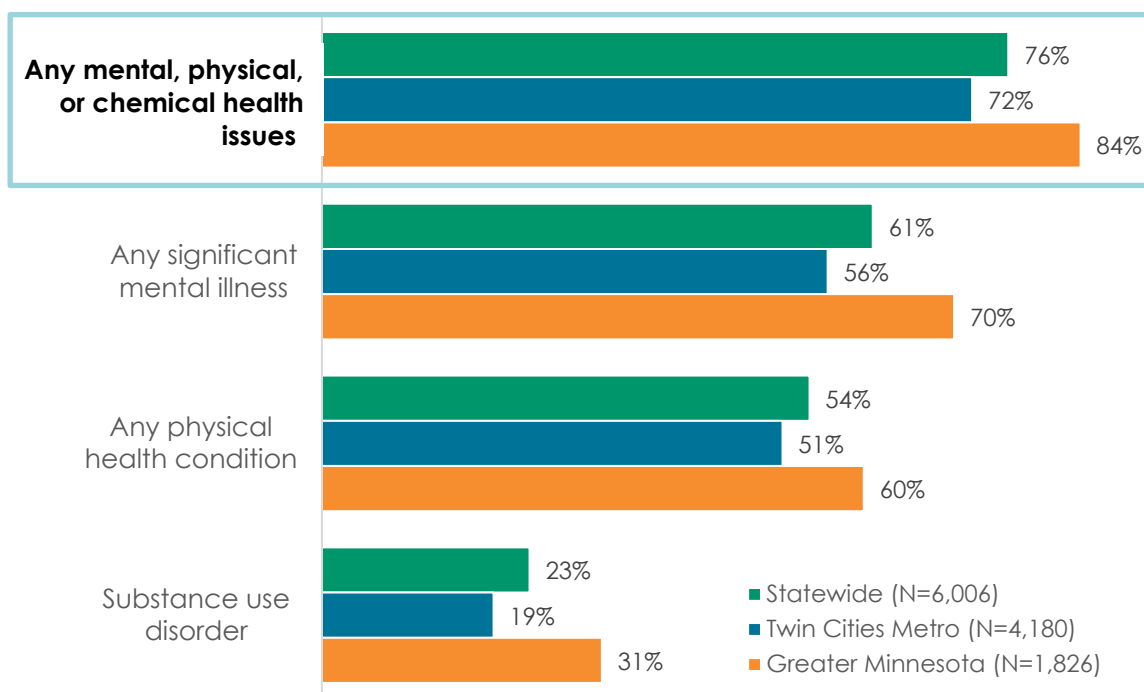
Greater Minnesota
(N=1,826)

Source. 2023 Minnesota Homeless Study interviews

Significant health issues are more prevalent among people in greater Minnesota.

Like traumatic experiences, health has huge impacts on a person's ability to find and maintain housing. The majority (76%) of people experiencing homelessness have significant health issues (Figure 6). While these numbers are staggeringly high across Minnesota, rates are even higher in greater Minnesota (84%) than in the Twin Cities metro (72%). This includes higher rates of the most common mental health concerns—anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder—and substance use disorder.

6. Health conditions among Minnesota adults experiencing homelessness



Source. 2023 Minnesota Homeless Study interviews

Note. Chart includes those who report a significant mental illness or substance use disorder in the past 2 years or a chronic physical health condition in the past 12 months. September 2024 version includes corrected physical health percentages

Affordability for those with very low incomes remains a top challenge to finding housing in both greater Minnesota and the Twin Cities metro.

When asked about challenges to finding housing, the top reason was “no affordable housing,” which has remained consistent throughout the 30 years of this study. Nearly half (49%) of people experiencing homelessness say this is an issue for them (Figure 7). Higher percentages of people experiencing homelessness in greater Minnesota have had challenges with affordable housing, credit problems, and rental history.

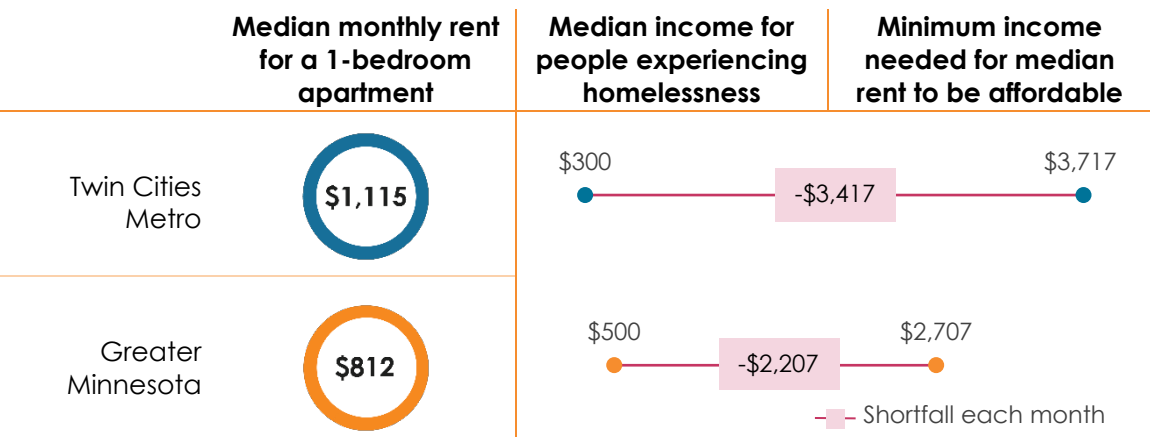
7. Challenges to finding housing

	Statewide (N=6,006)	Twin Cities Metro (N=4,180)	Greater Minnesota (N=1,826)
No affordable housing	49%	46%	55%
Credit problems	34%	31%	41%
No local rental history or references	26%	24%	29%

Source. 2023 Minnesota Homeless Study interviews
Note. Respondents were asked about several types of housing challenges. Only the top 3 are reported here.

To put affordability into context, the median income for people experiencing homelessness in greater Minnesota is \$500 per month, and only \$300 per month in the Twin Cities metro. However, in the Twin Cities metro, median rent is nearly four times that amount (\$1,115; Figure 8). Housing is considered affordable if the occupant spends 30% or less of their income on housing costs.⁴ Therefore, to afford the median rent for a 1-bedroom apartment in the Twin Cities, someone would have to earn at least \$3,717 per month, nowhere near \$300.

8. Median monthly income for people experiencing homelessness, compared to median monthly rent in 2023



Source for median monthly rent: Housing Link. (2024). Rental Revue data.

⁴ U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. <https://archives.hud.gov/local/nv/goodstories/2006-04-06glos.cfm>

Lack of affordable housing for very low income people is an obvious challenge to finding housing, but additional factors—systemic racism, high rates of trauma and violence, and complex health conditions—make it nearly impossible for some people to access even deeply affordable housing. Layered on top of each other, these factors create a cycle of homelessness that is difficult to break. This complexity highlights the intense need for our state to fund intentional, robust services and supports that address the multiple needs of people experiencing homelessness.

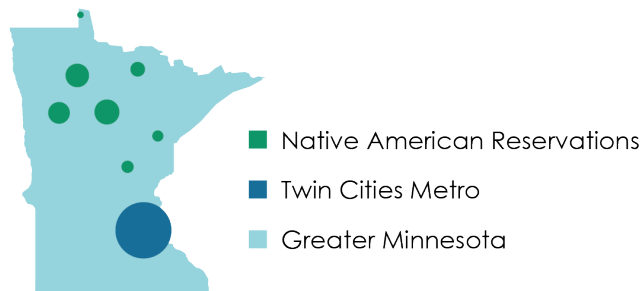
In the Twin Cities metro, Minnesota Homeless Study data speak to the **breadth** of needs for those experiencing homelessness, while data show the **depth** of need in greater Minnesota.

Wilder will continue to look at study data to highlight findings that can equip housing providers, advocates, and lawmakers with information to improve services and advance public policies.

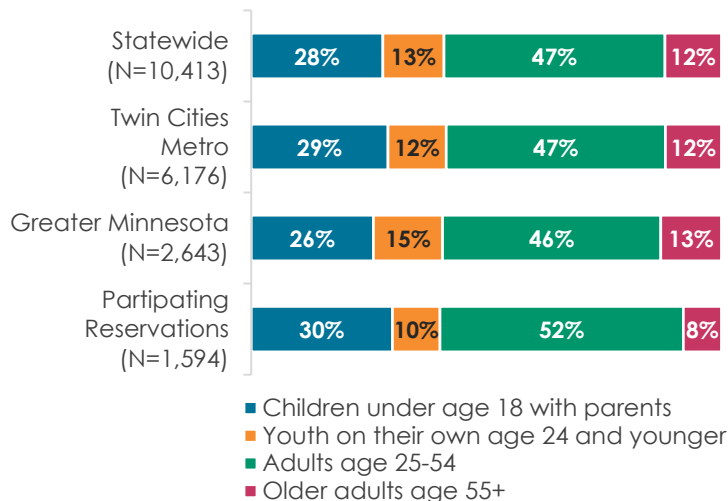


Demographics of people experiencing homelessness in Minnesota⁵

Geographies included in the Minnesota Homeless Study



Age, by geography



Age



Children and youth (age 24 and younger) account for 4 out of 10 people experiencing homelessness in Minnesota.

Family type



People in families (with children under 18) account for nearly half (47%) of people experiencing homelessness in Minnesota.

About the study

Every three years, Wilder Research conducts a one-day statewide study to better understand the prevalence of homelessness in Minnesota and the circumstances of those experiencing homelessness. The most recent study took place on October 26, 2023, and included:

- **Face-to-face interviews** with people throughout the state who meet a [federal definition of homelessness](#).
- **A count** of people experiencing homelessness.

In addition, six tribes in Minnesota partnered with Wilder Research to conduct the 2023 Reservation Homeless Study. This study took place during a similar time as the Minnesota Homeless Study and honors tribal ownership of their data. With permission from participating tribes (Bois Forte, Fond du Lac, Leech Lake, Mille Lacs, Red Lake, and White Earth), Wilder Research combined reservation counts with statewide counts to get a more complete number of people experiencing homelessness in Minnesota. However, *interview* data are not combined.

A note about sample sizes. Throughout this report, sample sizes, or Ns, vary by question. For ease in reporting, the overall, weighted Ns are shown at the top of each table (Statewide, N=6,006; Twin Cities metro, N=4,180; greater Minnesota, N=1,826). Readers should not try to calculate question-level Ns based on these tables. Instead, visit [mnhomeless.org](#) for detailed, question-by-question data tables.

The study is an independent initiative of Wilder Research in partnership with public and private funders and in-kind support from service providers throughout the state. For more information about this report, call Wilder Research, 651-280-2700, or visit [mnhomeless.org](#).

Authors: Stephanie Nelson-Dusek, Michelle Decker Gerrard, and Rebecca Sales

Report design: Maureen McGovern

⁵ Demographics are based on 2023 Minnesota Homeless Study counts data.



Minnesota Homeless Study

A Project of Wilder Research

Study impact

Supports **community well-being** by giving local and state government, homeless and housing service providers, and the many organizations serving the community (e.g. healthcare, etc.) easily accessible, reliable data informing how to support families and individuals experiencing homelessness and housing instability.

- Tracks progress in efforts to reduce and ultimately eliminate homelessness in Minnesota
- Guides the planning and design of services and programs that address the needs of those experiencing homelessness and housing instability



The method used in the study is far superior to other homeless data sources and provides much more tangible evidence of whether we are making progress in ending homelessness or not... Without this information, Minnesota would not be able to prove their investments are working OR show the need for more investments to end homelessness.

- Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless

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Impact statements below demonstrate how the study positively impacts organizations and communities across the state.

Union Gospel Mission Twin Cities We use the information from this study as we improve our programs and services for people experiencing homelessness, hunger, and addiction...Should this study end, it would be highly detrimental to our ability to know how we can better serve the community. Put simply, people would fall through the cracks.

Minnesota Tribal Collaborative Since 2006 the data collected from the Homeless and Near Homeless on American Indian Reservations survey, has been used to prioritize needs, identify systemic issues, and improve programs and policies to address homelessness in our state. After the 2006 data was collected, Minnesota tribes used the data to develop the first in the U.S.A. tribal plans to prevent and end homelessness.

Oasis Central Minnesota The Minnesota Homeless Study has been instrumental in shaping our programs. This data informs the development of effective, targeted initiatives that address the root causes of homelessness and housing instability—leading to higher success rates in long-term housing stability and reducing the length of shelter stays for participants. Without continued funding for this study, we would face significant obstacles in both program delivery and securing the necessary resources to meet the full scope of our community's needs.

Metro Transit Police Department Homeless Action Team ...outreach partners from non-profits heavily rely on funding from grants. The data that the Homeless Study provides is highly necessary to support applications for such grants. It is also important because we use the data to back our financial requests for supplies and for contracting services/partners, which we do every year. This data is more important than ever for us, and many other organizations, in a time when homelessness is increasing, and service providers are struggling to keep up.

Catholic Charities Twin Cities For many years now, we have drawn on rich descriptive information the study provides to inform our service delivery models, raise funds, and shape our advocacy activities.

State agency uses of study

- Developing legislative reports, such as the Homeless Youth Act Legislative Report
- Completing funding applications, such as when responding to a federal RFP/NOFO
- Responding to partner and legislator inquiries about trends and community needs
- Informing funding decisions – for example, helping to ensure distribution of grant funding (e.g., rural versus metro) aligns with need
- Understanding who is experiencing homelessness and why
- Estimating the need for supportive housing and homelessness prevention services
- Determining the share of homelessness resources allocated to Tribal Nations
- Referring to the detailed data tables provided on Wilder Research's website to answer in real time questions about homelessness in Minnesota

Homelessness Among Adults 55+ in Minnesota

How do older adults experience homelessness?



Homelessness is a result of multiple system failures. This includes a profound shortage of housing for people with extremely low incomes, as well as inadequate systems to support complex, interrelated needs. In addition to a lack of housing, homelessness can be caused and sustained by trauma, systemic racism, unemployment, or personal health challenges. As a result, homelessness is different for every person who experiences it.

This brief explores the ways that older adults experience homelessness. The issues we face as we age—including health concerns and fixed income—are magnified by the difficult conditions associated with being homeless.

Issue Brief

This brief is part of a series that examines interview data from the 2023 Minnesota Homeless Study. Each report explores a specific aspect of homelessness and provides detailed data that can be used to inform services, interventions, and policies across our state.

For all available results from the study, and the Reservation Homeless Study, visit mnhomeless.org.

Executive summary

Research related to older adults experiencing homelessness uses a younger age cutoff than the general population. This is because the intense hardships that people face while homeless cause them to have similar outcomes to a much older person. According to a 2023 federal report, “the health and mobility of adults experiencing homelessness at age 50 is similar to that of housed adults who are 15-20 years older.”¹ At the same time, many housing and service providers are required to define older adults as age 55+ or 62+ because of eligibility restrictions for public benefits. Because of this range, Wilder Research uses 55+ as the definition of “older adult.”

About this population

Among the 1,204 older adults experiencing homelessness in Minnesota:

- The average age was 62 years old; the oldest adult interviewed for the study was 87 years old.
- Nearly half (48%) first became homeless at age 50 or older.
- 62% are considered long-term homeless, meaning they have been homeless for 1+ years *or* 4+ times in the past 3 years.

Key findings



More older adults are experiencing homelessness in Minnesota than ever before.



Homelessness complicates the health issues and limitations that can coincide with aging.



Even with access to the public benefits that are associated with age or disability, older adults experiencing homelessness cannot afford their basic needs.



Four in ten older adults experiencing homelessness have slept outside at least one night.



People who are first homeless at 50 or older are less often impacted by the experiences that prolong or speed entry into homelessness.

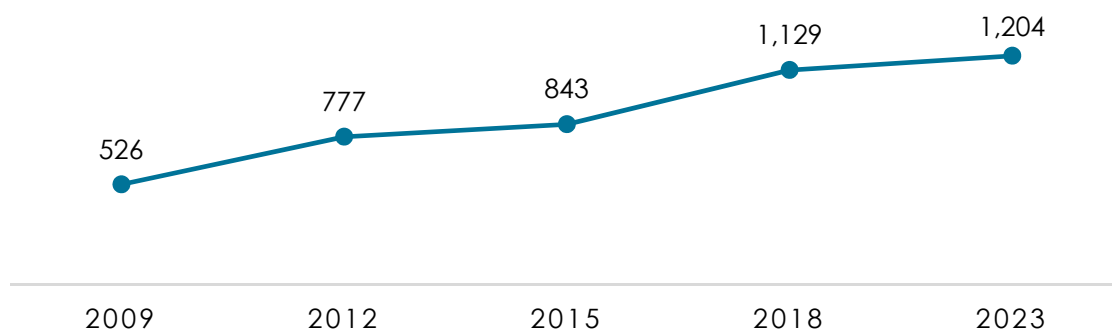
¹ Henderson, K. A., Manian, N., Rog, D. J., Robison, E., Jorge, E., & Al-Abdulmunem, M. (2023). *Addressing homelessness among older adults: Final report*. Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, p. 14.
<https://aspe.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/9ac2d2a7e8c360b4e75932b96f59a20b/addressing-older-adult-homelessness.pdf>.

More older adults are experiencing homelessness in Minnesota than ever before.

The 2023 Minnesota Homeless Study found 1,204 adults who were age 55 or older experiencing homelessness – 12% of the entire homeless population.

Over the 30-year history of the Homeless Study, older adults have been less likely to experience homelessness than younger Minnesotans. While this is still true in 2023, there is one startling difference: Older adults (age 55+) were the *only* age group that saw an increase in numbers (7% increase) between 2018 and 2023. In addition, there are more older adults experiencing homelessness in 2023 than in any other study year (Figure 1).

1. Number of older adults experiencing homelessness in Minnesota, 2009-2023

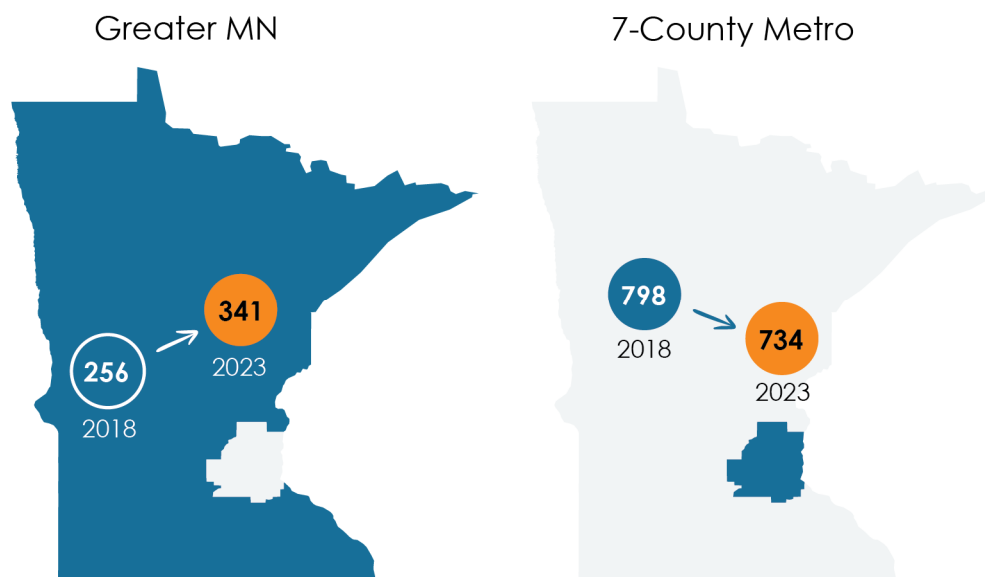


Source. 2023 Minnesota Homeless Study counts

Note. With permission from participating tribes, the 2018 and 2023 counts in this trendline include Reservation Homeless Study data. Reservation Study data are only included in this trendline and the age chart on the last page. Prior to 2009, age data were collected differently and are not comparable to the data points presented in this chart.

The increase appears to be driven by numbers in greater Minnesota, where there was a 33% increase in older adults experiencing homelessness, compared to a decrease of 8% in the 7-county metro area (Figure 2).

2. Number of older adults experiencing homelessness by region, 2018 and 2023



Source. 2023 Minnesota Homeless Study counts

Homelessness complicates the health issues and limitations that can coincide with aging.

Physical and mental health issues can be limiting for anyone, but, as we age, health concerns can reduce our capacity to do daily activities. When considering the day-to-day impact of health among homeless older adults, it is alarming that approximately one-third report having cognitive issues² (38%) or difficulty taking care of their own daily needs, such as getting dressed, getting in and out of a bed or chair, and getting around by themselves (31%). This, coupled with the fact that nearly all older adults (87%) live alone while homeless, means they have few options beyond service providers to help them address urgent needs or support them with daily tasks.



Report having cognitive issues

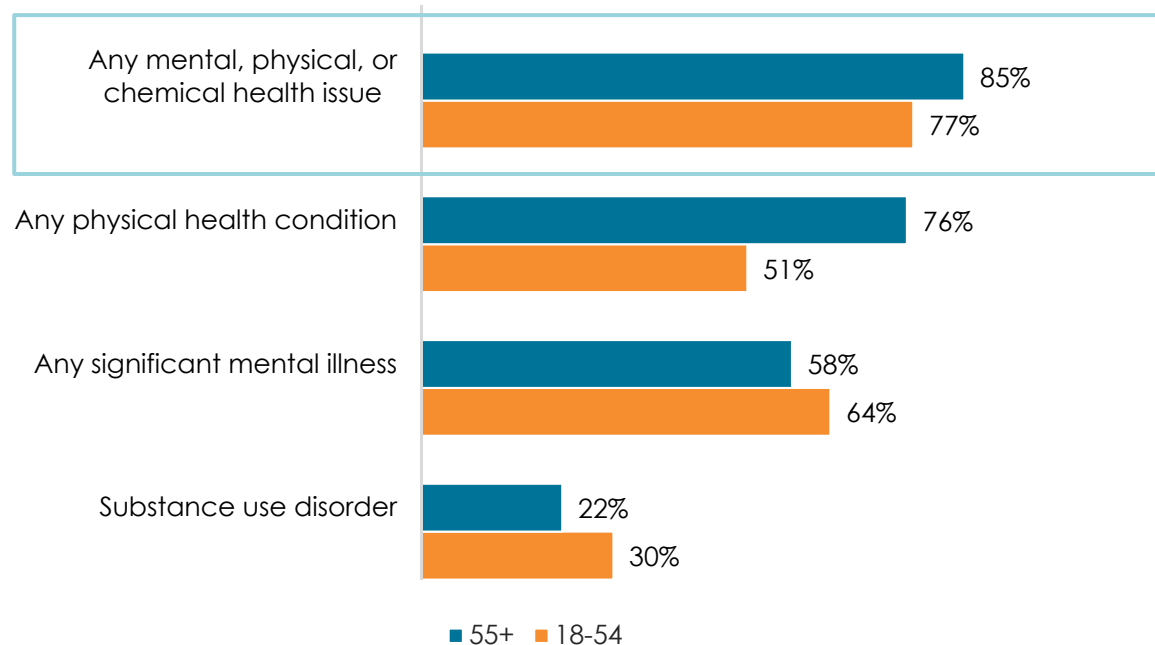


Have difficulty taking care of their own daily needs

The majority (85%) of homeless older adults reported a serious or chronic health condition (Figure 3). About three-quarters (76%) have a physical health condition (compared to 51% of adults age 18-54). The most common physical health issues were chronic pain (47%), high blood pressure (47%), diabetes (21%), and chronic heart conditions (19%). All of these conditions, left unmonitored or uncontrolled, can become deadly.

Rates of mental illness and substance use disorder are similar between adult age groups; top mental health diagnoses for older adults are anxiety or panic disorder (42%), major depression (41%), and post-traumatic stress disorder, or PTSD (31%).

3. Health conditions among adults experiencing homelessness



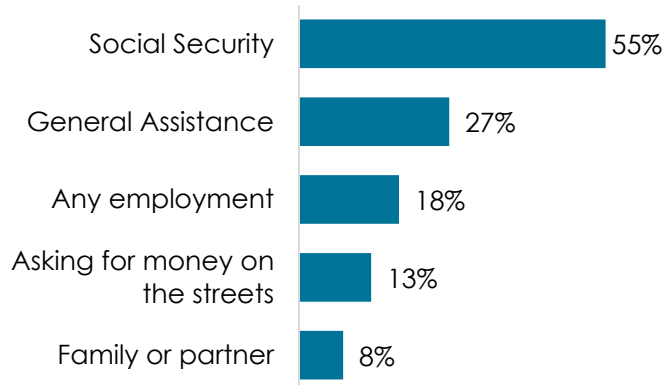
Source. 2023 Minnesota Homeless Study interviews

² “Cognitive issues” means that a respondent said they “often feel confused or have trouble remembering things, or have problems making decisions, to the point that it interferes with your daily activities.”

Even with access to public benefits that are associated with age or disability, older adults experiencing homelessness cannot afford their basic needs.

The most common sources of income for older adults experiencing homelessness are Social Security (senior, survivor, or disability benefits) (55%) and General Assistance (27%; Figure 4); both are government entitlement benefits.

4. Five most common sources of income for older adults experiencing homelessness



Source. 2023 Minnesota Homeless Study interviews

Social Security benefits include all forms of social security as described by the federal government: retirement, disability, survivor, family, and Supplemental Security Income (SSI). Eligibility is defined differently for each type of benefit. For example, the retirement benefit begins at age 62 and is based on previous work. Those who are eligible receive a monthly check to replace part of their income.³

General Assistance (GA) provides cash grants to people without sufficient income to meet their basic needs, including those with serious illnesses, disabilities, or other circumstances that limit their ability to work. The current maximum benefit for GA is \$350 per month.⁴

Given the advanced age and physical issues affecting this population, it is not surprising to see lower levels of employment. Twelve percent of older adults experiencing homelessness were currently employed (including temporary work). The biggest barrier to employment—among those *not* currently employed—was physical health or disability (54%, compared to 26% of adults age 18-54).

The ability to access Social Security is likely a strong contributor to a higher median monthly income for older adults experiencing homelessness (\$875 per month, compared to \$203 per month for those age 18-54; Figure 5). Despite higher income levels, older adults experiencing homelessness cannot afford basic needs, including housing and food.

5. Median monthly income for adults experiencing homelessness, by age range

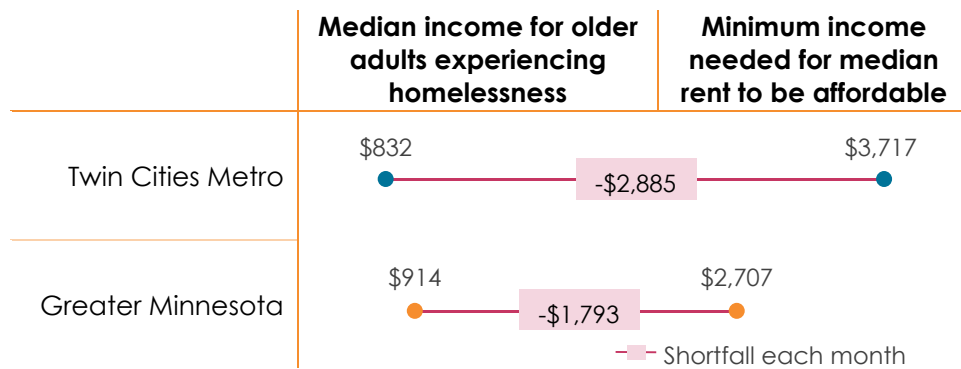


³ U.S. Social Security Administration. (n.d.). *Social Security in retirement*. <https://www.ssa.gov/retirement>

⁴ Minnesota Department of Human Services. (2025). *General Assistance (GA)*. <https://mn.gov/dhs/people-we-serve/seniors/economic-assistance/income/programs-and-services/ga.jsp>

Housing is considered affordable if the occupant spends 30% or less of their income on housing costs.⁵ To afford the median rent for a 1-bedroom apartment in the Twin Cities, someone would have to earn at least \$3,717 per month, far more than the median income of older adults experiencing homelessness in the Twin Cities metro (\$832 per month; Figure 6). The same is true in greater Minnesota, where median monthly income for older adults experiencing homelessness is \$914, but they would need to earn at least \$2,707 per month to access affordable housing.

6. Median monthly income for older adults experiencing homelessness, compared to affordable monthly rent in 2023



Median monthly rent for a 1-bedroom apartment: Twin Cities Metro, \$1,115 and Greater Minnesota \$812

Source for median monthly income: 2023 Minnesota Homeless Study interviews

Source for median monthly rent: Housing Link. (2024). *Rental Revue* data.

Older adults also rely on comprehensive food access services: 74% had accessed free hot meals in the past month and 41% said this was among the most helpful services they received (Figure 7). Food stamps were the second most used (60%) and helpful (37%) service (nearly all older adults in this population would be eligible for food stamps⁶). Roughly half (47%) of older adults experiencing homelessness also used a food shelf in the month prior to the Homeless Study.

7. Food-related services in October 2023 for older adults experiencing homelessness

	Services received in the last month	Services that have helped the most
Free hot meals	74%	41%
Food Stamps or SNAP	60%	37%
Food from a food shelf	47%	17%

Source. 2023 Minnesota Homeless Study interviews

Note. Respondents were asked about 16 different services they may have received in the past month.

Access to food is critical for this population, especially because homeless older adults have high rates of food insecurity. A 2018 study found that over half of homeless older adults reported food insecurity, a rate “two times higher than national estimates in the U.S. poverty population.”⁷ In the general population of the United States, fewer than 10% of adults age 50+ experience food insecurity.

⁵ U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. <https://archives.hud.gov/local/nv/goodstories/2006-04-06glos.cfm>

⁶ A 1-member household can access SNAP benefits if they have a monthly income of \$2,510 or less, with a maximum benefit of \$291. <https://dcyf.mn.gov/programs-directory/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap>

⁷ Tong, M., Tieu, L., Lee, C. T., Ponath, C., Guzman, D. & Kushel, M. (2019). *Factors associated with food insecurity among older homeless adults: Results from the HOPE HOME study*. Journal of Public Health, 41(2), 240–249. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/29617886/>

Four in ten older adults experiencing homelessness have slept outside at least one night.

Nearly three-quarters of older adults experiencing homelessness (72%) slept in a shelter or transitional housing program for one or more nights in the month before the Homeless Study. While this population is more often sheltered, compared to adults age 18-54, it is troubling that 42% had slept outside for one or more nights in the past 30 days (Figure 8).

In fact, 27% of older adults experiencing homelessness were considered unsheltered—meaning they had slept outside for 15+ nights in the past month; 29% had been turned away from shelter in the past three months because there was no space available.

8. Sleeping situation in the past month for older adults experiencing homelessness

In the last 30 days, spent at least 1 night...	Adults 55+
In a shelter or transitional housing program	72%
Outside or in a car or vacant building	42%
Doubled up in someone else's house or apartment	21%
In regular housing (not doubled up)	8%
Turned away from shelter in the past 3 months because there was no space available	29%

Source. 2023 Minnesota Homeless Study interviews

As discussed in [Unsheltered homelessness: Understanding the experiences and effects of sleeping outside](#), “Sleeping outside creates additional vulnerability for people who are already dealing with a variety of personal and systemic challenges.” The lack of shelter for older adults exacerbates already complex health challenges. Older adults (55+) who had spent at least one night sleeping outside in the previous month were more likely (than those who had spent no nights outside) to report:

- Problems with confusion or trouble remembering things (47% vs. 32%)
- Physical or mental health conditions that limit their daily activities (38% vs. 26%)

Older adults who were first homeless at age 50+ are typically less impacted by experiences that prolong or speed entry into homelessness.

The age at which someone first becomes homeless helps us understand what contributed to their homelessness and what prevents them from accessing housing. For older adults (55+), researchers see roughly two types of experiences: 1) people who have aged into homelessness due to long, complex histories that keep them locked into the cycle of homelessness, and 2) people who became homeless for the first time later in life. The distinct differences between these two populations highlight the importance of using multiple approaches in addressing homelessness.

In Minnesota, nearly half (48%) of older adults (age 55+) experiencing homelessness became homeless for the first time at age 50+, compared to 52% who became homeless prior to age 50. Between these two groups, there are notable differences between the average age of first homelessness (a 32-year difference), race, and traumatic childhood experiences (Figure 9).

9. Experiences of homeless older adults, by age of first homelessness

	First homeless at <50 years	First homeless at 50+ years
Demographics		
% of 55+ who are Native American or people of color	61%	43%
Average age of first time homeless	28	60
Childhood experiences		
Witnessed abuse of a family member	46%	31%
Physically mistreated or abused	41%	28%
Went without food, shelter, or medical care or left alone for long periods of time	22%	8%
Lived in an institutional setting as a child (i.e., foster home, treatment facility, or juvenile detention)	34%	15%

Source. 2023 Minnesota Homeless Study interviews

While difficult childhood experiences do not destine anyone to experience homelessness, they are indicative of larger systemic and family issues that are influential during a person's formative years. Older adults have had decades after childhood to accumulate experiences that shape their lives.

What we continue to see is that people who are *first* homeless at age 50 or older are less often impacted by the experiences and characteristics that speed entry into (or prolong) homelessness. These include factors such as involvement with the criminal justice system, mental health challenges, and experiences with violence and exploitation. In addition to having fewer challenges, those first homeless after age 50 have higher levels of income (Figure 10).

10. Experiences and characteristics that contribute to or prolong homelessness among older adults experiencing homelessness

	First homeless at <50 years	First homeless at 50+ years
Experience with violence and exploitation		
Ever been attacked or assaulted while homeless	39%	19%
Ever stayed in an abusive situation because there were no other housing options	37%	19%
Involvement with justice system		
Served time in juvenile detention, jail, or prison	66%	42%
Ever convicted of a felony	47%	30%
Health concerns		
Ever had a traumatic head injury	68%	50%
Significant mental illness (a recent diagnosis or mental health treatment in the past 2 years)	65%	51%
Often experience cognitive issues that interfere with daily activities	45%	32%
Consider self an alcoholic or chemically dependent	36%	22%
Income		
Median monthly income	\$800	\$914

Source. 2023 Minnesota Homeless Study interviews

In 2023, there were more older adults experiencing homelessness in Minnesota than at any other point in the 30-year history of the Homeless Study. Startlingly, older adults were the *only* age group that saw an increase in numbers between 2018 and 2023.

There are generally two reasons why someone may experience homelessness as an older adult: 1) They aged into homelessness as part of a complex, ongoing cycle, or 2) They became homeless for the first time because of economic and health-related challenges. Either way, our systems have failed both groups of people.

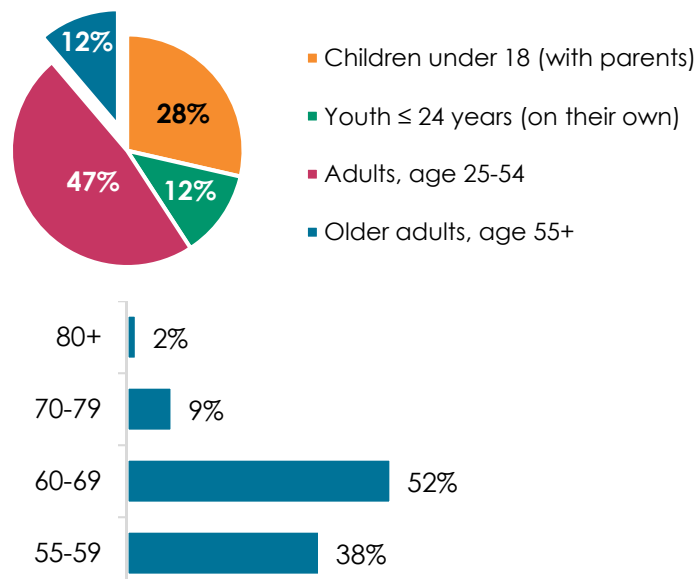
Childhood trauma, involvement with the criminal justice system, and substance use can all contribute to and prolong homelessness. At the same time, the physical and cognitive health challenges that coincide with aging can limit daily activities and worsen housing instability. Income is also an issue as older adults retire or lose employment. Although Social Security benefits alone cannot cover the cost of basic needs, especially housing, benefits such as food assistance and Social Security are vital to the stability of this population. Therefore, cuts to these programs would pose the extreme risk of pushing people into (or further into) homelessness.

Taking care of our elders means supporting their individual needs, whether that be combating isolation, paying for medications, supplementing income, or providing wrap-around services to treat complex mental health and substance use issues. Wilder will continue to look at study data to highlight findings that can equip providers, advocates, and lawmakers with information to improve services and advance public policies.



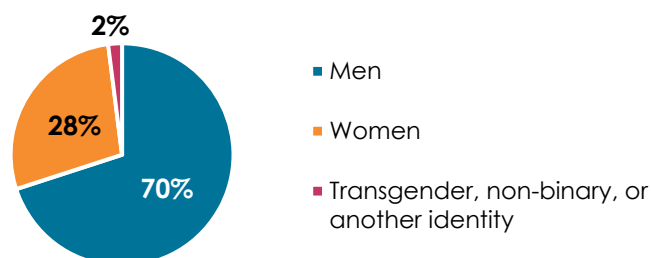
Older adults (age 55+) experiencing homelessness in Minnesota

Age

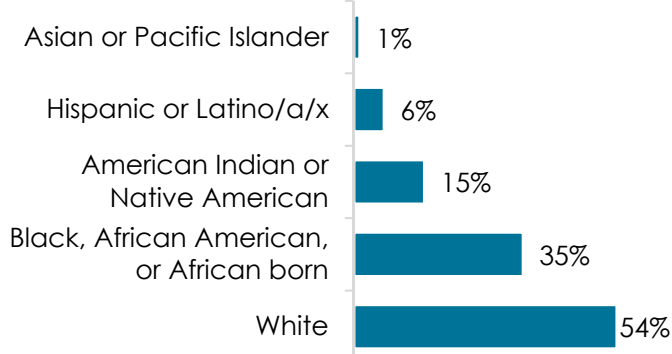


Note. Age data are from Homeless Study counts, which include Reservation data. Gender identity, race, and ethnicity are from interview data and do not include Reservation data.

Gender identity of older adults



Racial and ethnic identities of older adults



Note. Respondents could choose more than one identity.

Every three years, Wilder Research conducts a one-day statewide study to better understand the prevalence of homelessness in Minnesota and the circumstances of those experiencing homelessness. The most recent study took place on October 26, 2023, and included:

- **Face-to-face interviews** with people throughout the state who meet a [federal definition of homelessness](#).
- **A count** of people experiencing homelessness.

In addition, six tribes in Minnesota partnered with Wilder Research to conduct the 2023 Reservation Homeless Study. This study took place during a similar time as the Minnesota Homeless Study and honors tribal ownership of their data. **Two charts in this report include Reservation Study data.** An aggregate report on reservation homelessness will be published in 2025.

A note about sample sizes. Throughout this report, sample sizes, or Ns, vary by question. In general, Ns for the two primary categories in this brief are:

- Adults 18-54, n=2,862
- Adults 55+, n=709

Readers should not try to calculate question-level numbers based on these tables. Visit [mnhomeless.org](#) for detailed, question-by-question data tables.

The study is an independent initiative of Wilder Research in partnership with public and private funders and in-kind support from service providers throughout the state. For more information about this report, call Wilder Research, 651-280-2700, or visit [mnhomeless.org](#).

Authors: Christin Lindberg, Stephanie Nelson-Dusek, and Rebecca Sales

Report design: Maureen McGovern

Unsheltered Homelessness

**Understanding the experiences and effects of
sleeping outside**



Homelessness is a result of multiple system failures. This includes a profound shortage of housing for people with extremely low incomes, as well as inadequate systems to support complex, interrelated needs. In addition to a lack of housing, homelessness can be caused and sustained by trauma, systemic racism, unemployment, or personal health challenges. As a result, homelessness is different for every person who experiences it.

The Minnesota Homeless Study is unique in that it asks people to report on where they slept each night in the past month. Unlike a point-in-time count, which only considers one night of a person's experience, Minnesota Homeless Study data help us understand shelter patterns and how outcomes differ depending on whether and how often someone sleeps outside. The following brief uses this novel and robust data source to highlight unsheltered homelessness among adults (18+) and its relationship with health and well-being.

Issue Brief

This brief is part of a series that examines interview data from the 2023 Minnesota Homeless Study. Each report explores a specific aspect of homelessness and provides detailed data that can be used to inform services, interventions, and policies across our state.

For all available results from the study, as well as the Reservation Homeless Study, visit mnhomeless.org.

Key findings

These findings highlight *unsheltered* homelessness in Minnesota, focusing on adults (18+) who have slept outside for 15+ nights in the past month. This particular group represented 23% of the homeless adults in our study – about 1,300 people. However, we know this is an undercount. We cannot interview everyone experiencing homelessness, but, unlike those staying in the shelter system, we have no way of knowing how many more people were staying outside on the night of the study than we interviewed.



Unsheltered homelessness in Minnesota has increased over the past decade.¹



The alarming overrepresentation of Native Americans experiencing homelessness is magnified within the unsheltered population.



Unsheltered women experience much higher rates of violence and exploitation than men.



People experiencing unsheltered homelessness face profound substance use challenges, which often co-occur with mental health conditions.



High rates of previous incarceration create further instability for those who are unsheltered.



The majority of Minnesota's unsheltered population is stuck in long-term homelessness.

¹ Unsheltered homelessness includes spending the night outside, in a car or vacant building, or on public transportation.

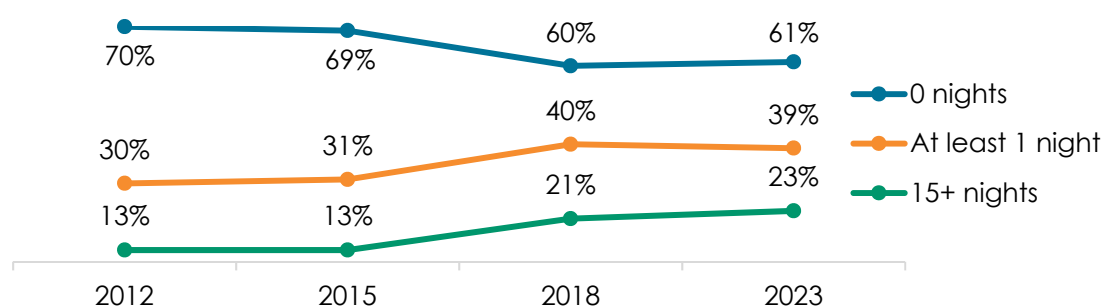
Unsheltered homelessness in Minnesota has increased over the past decade.

Unsheltered homelessness is complicated. On the one hand, it can be the most visible and stereotyped form of homelessness, conjuring images of roadside encampments and people asking for money on the streets. On the other hand, people sleeping outside can be some of the hardest to find, easily slipping through the gaps in our social service systems.

Over the past decade, Minnesota has seen a clear increase in unsheltered homelessness. In 2023, nearly one-quarter (23%) of the homeless population spent at least half of the previous month outside, compared to 13% in 2012 (Figure 1). Among all people experiencing homelessness, there has also been an increase in the average number of nights that people have slept outside in the past month, from 4 nights in 2012 to 7 nights in 2023. For the trend line showing all people experiencing homelessness, including those in shelter, see our [Single Night Count of People Experiencing Homelessness](#).

Two-thirds of people spending 15+ nights outside were interviewed in the 7-county metro area; however, the rate of unsheltered homelessness is similar between greater Minnesota and the Twin Cities metro. In greater Minnesota, 25% of people experiencing homelessness slept outside for 15+ nights during the month, compared to 22% in the Twin Cities metro (see [Homelessness in the Twin Cities and Greater Minnesota](#)).

1. Nights spent outside in the past month, 2012-2023



Source. 2012-2023 Minnesota Homeless Study interviews

While the biggest increase in unsheltered homelessness appears to have occurred between the 2015 and 2018 Homeless Studies, the unprecedented level of federal funding for rental and housing assistance, spurred by the COVID-19 pandemic, likely prevented a greater increase between 2018 and 2023.

It can be easy to assume that people staying inside² — for example, in an emergency shelter—are consistently sheltered; however, the reality is far more complex. Shelter systems in Minnesota, and across the country, are stretched to capacity. In other words, many people must piece together shelter options, sometimes having to sleep outside.

Of people interviewed inside on October 26, 2023,

27%

were unsheltered at some point in the past month

² Those staying inside were most often in emergency shelters, but also could have been staying in transitional housing, a voucher program, unstably doubled-up, or about to be evicted with nowhere else to go.

The alarming overrepresentation of Native Americans experiencing homelessness is magnified within the unsheltered population.

Systemic racism, including a history of genocide, slavery, segregation, redlining and other housing discrimination, and lack of access to financial systems has created huge racial disparities in wealth and homeownership in our country. For Native American people experiencing homelessness, these disparities are compounded within the unsheltered population.

While Native Americans make up only 2% of Minnesota's adult population,³ they represent 20% of the overall homeless population and 32% of people who were unsheltered for at least half of the month (Figure 2). This disproportionality is larger for Native Americans than any other racial or ethnic group.

2. Proportion of Native Americans in the state population, in the overall homeless population, and experiencing unsheltered homelessness (15+ nights)



Sources. 2023 Minnesota Homeless Study interviews and 2023 data from the U.S. Census Bureau.

Note. Respondents could choose more than one racial or ethnic identity. 2023 Reservation Homeless Study data are not included in this issue brief, as tribes own their data; those data are reported separately.

The disparity is slightly larger in the Twin Cities metro, where 34% of people who slept outside for at least half of the month were Native American, compared to 29% in greater Minnesota. It is important to note that Native American reservations also experience high rates of unsheltered homelessness. Reservation Homeless Study data are not included in this report. Those data are analyzed and aggregated separately, guided by principles of data sovereignty.

While Homeless Study data cannot explicitly tell us why such a high proportion of Native Americans are unsheltered, our data and insights from study partners suggest a few possible reasons. Rates of substance use are high within the unsheltered population. Among Native Americans who slept outside for at least half of the month, 57% had used methamphetamine and 43% had used fentanyl – compared to Native Americans who were sheltered all month (8% had used methamphetamine and 7% had used fentanyl). Additionally, Native Americans may sleep outside due to the lack of culturally welcoming spaces. People sometimes prefer sleeping outside, especially if it brings them closer to their cultural community. Responses to community challenges have often excluded the communities which are most oppressed, creating further distrust. For example, it wasn't until 2014—just 10 years ago—that Native communities had an official presence in the homeless response system with the formation of the [Minnesota Tribal Collaborative to Prevent and End Homelessness \(the “Tribal Collaborative”\)](https://mntribalcollaborative.org/about-us/).⁴

³ U.S. Census Bureau. (2023). *Population Estimates Program 2023 Vintage*. Retrieved August 2024 from <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/popest.html>. This percentage includes multi-racial.

⁴ Minnesota Tribal Collaborative to Prevent and End Homelessness. (n.d.) <https://mntribalcollaborative.org/about-us/>

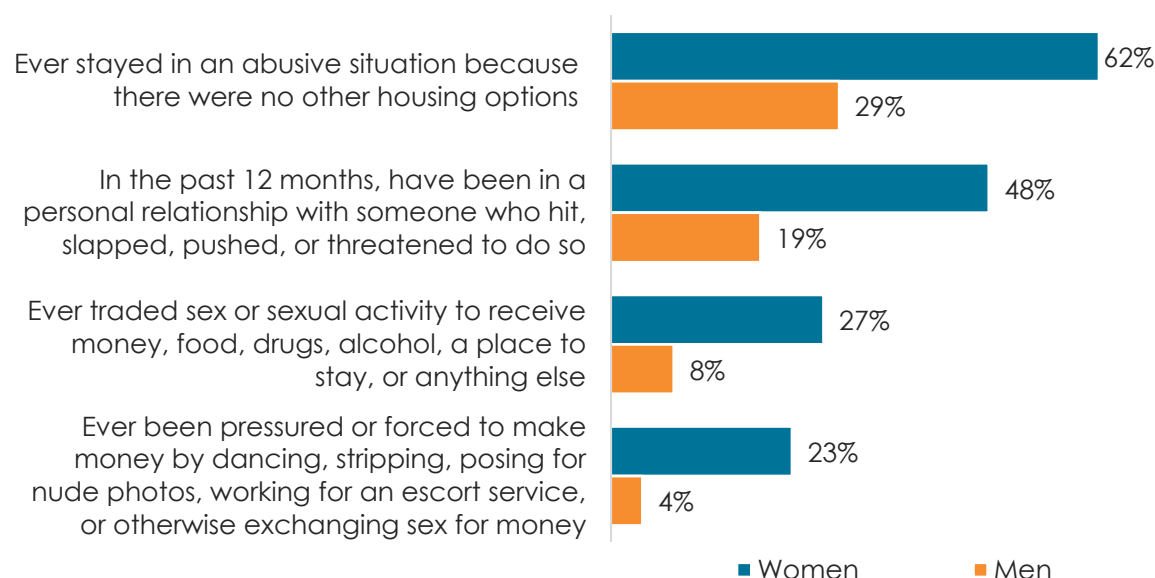
Unsheltered women experience much higher rates of violence and exploitation than men.

Sleeping outside creates additional vulnerability for people who are already dealing with a variety of personal and systemic challenges. Those who were unsheltered (15+ nights outside) were more likely to have ever been attacked or assaulted while homeless (51%) compared to people who were sheltered for the full month (28%).

For women—who account for 35% of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness (15+ nights)—rates of violence and exploitation are higher; 57% of unsheltered women have been attacked or assaulted while homeless, compared to 48% of men.⁵ Because the number of unsheltered people who identify as transgender or non-binary in the study is so small, we do not report their results here.

Women are far more impacted by intimate partner violence and exploitative transactions to meet their basic needs. For example, six in ten women (62%) who spent at least half of the past month unsheltered had stayed in an abusive situation because they had no other housing options, compared to 29% of men who said the same (Figure 3).

3. Experiences of violence and exploitation among the unsheltered population (15+ nights), by gender



Source. 2023 Minnesota Homeless Study interviews

These findings highlight a landscape in which women are more often forced to make difficult trade-offs and are particularly vulnerable to exploitation and unsafe situations. As such, interventions that work for women sleeping outside will look different from those for men.

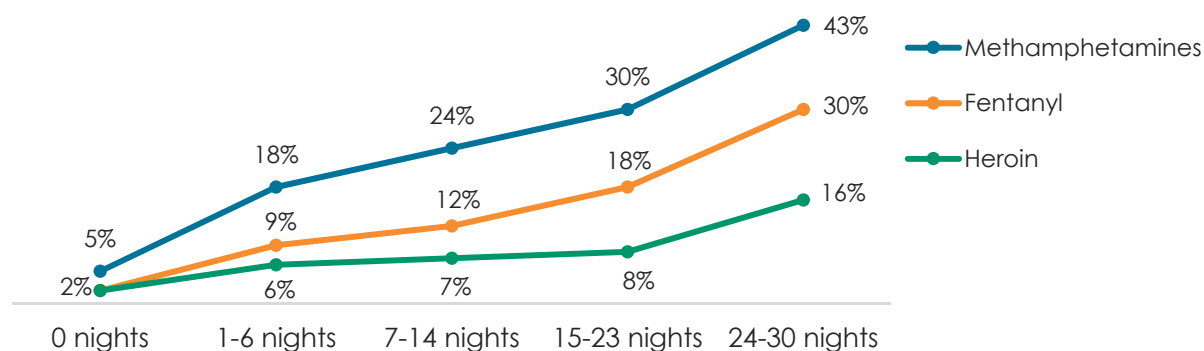
⁵ For the purposes of this analysis, “men” and “women” refer to cisgender men and women.

People experiencing unsheltered homelessness face profound substance use challenges, which often co-occur with mental health conditions.

Substance use and mental health interact with homelessness in multiple ways. Untreated, mental health conditions or substance use can contribute to becoming homeless. They can also create barriers to accessing shelter or stable housing, due to sobriety policies or problematic behaviors that could impact other residents. At the same time, homelessness can worsen a person's substance use or mental health condition, perpetuating the cycle of homelessness.

Minnesota Homeless Study data show that rates of drug use increase as the number of nights spent outside increases. The prevalence of methamphetamine and fentanyl use is especially shocking among those who are unsheltered. For example, the rate of fentanyl use was 15 times higher for someone who spent 24-30 nights outside (30%) than for someone who was in shelter the full month (2%). The rate of methamphetamine use was 8.6 times higher (43% compared to 5%; Figure 4). Rates of legal substance use (i.e., alcohol and marijuana) also increase as the number of nights spent outside increases, but not as sharply.

4. Illegal substances used in the past 30 days, by nights unsheltered



Source. 2023 Minnesota Homeless Study interviews

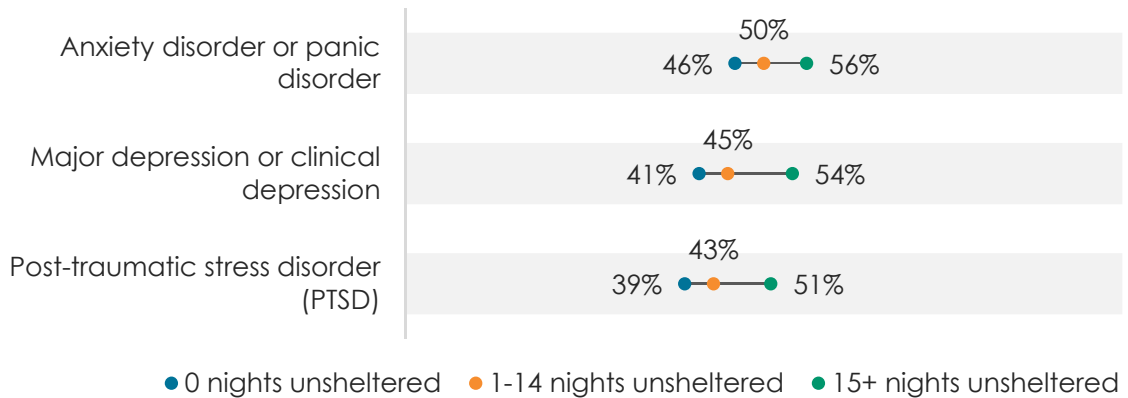
In addition, the rate of people experiencing a nonfatal drug overdose in the past year is four times higher for people who were unsheltered 15+ nights (17%) than for people who were in shelter all month (4%). Sadly, this is still an undercount, as the Homeless Study only accounts for *non-fatal* overdoses. For information on *fatal* overdoses, see the Minnesota Department of Health's [Minnesota Homeless Mortality Report, 2017-2021](#).

Substance use often co-occurs with mental health challenges (together known as “behavioral health”). Behavioral health challenges are typically higher among those experiencing homelessness than in the general population, but even more so for people who spent at least half of the month sleeping outside. The majority (84%) of people who slept for 15+ nights outside had mental health or substance use challenges that would be significant barriers to getting housing or even shelter,⁶ compared to 63% who were sheltered for the full month.

⁶ This includes being diagnosed with a mental health condition or substance use disorder in the past two years, going to outpatient mental health or substance use treatment in the past two years, or using illegal substances in the past 30 days.

Those who were unsheltered for at least half of the month were also more likely to report that they had a recent diagnosis of anxiety, depression, or post-traumatic stress disorder (Figure 5).

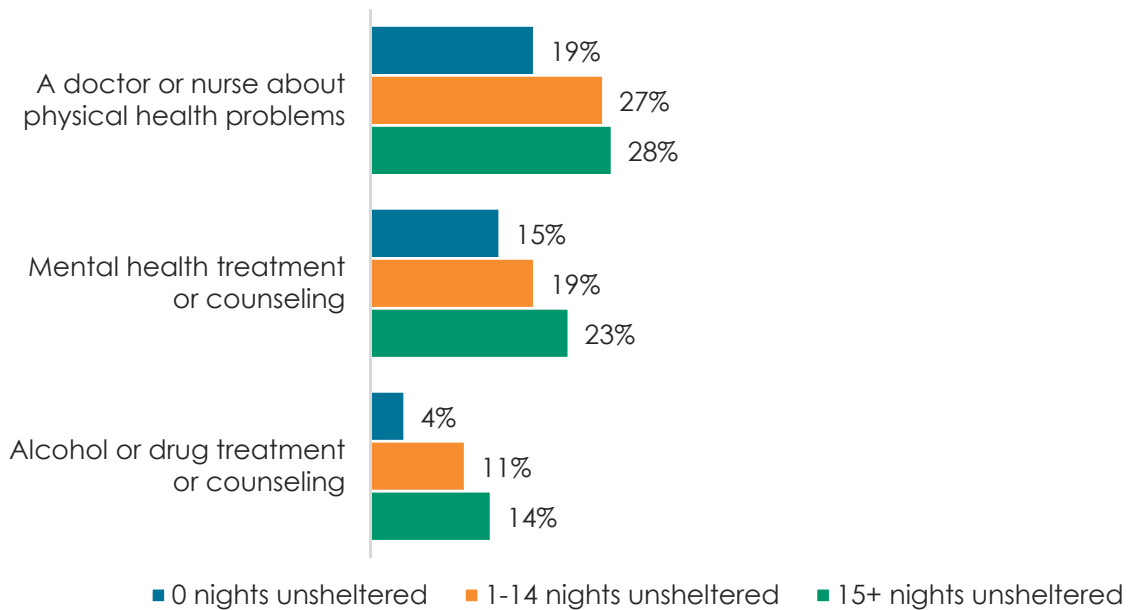
5. Top mental health challenges, by nights unsheltered



Source. 2023 Minnesota Homeless Study interviews

While substance use and mental health challenges are higher among those who are unsheltered, this population is less likely to receive needed behavioral health services (Figure 6). They are also less likely to receive needed physical health services; however, it is worth noting that rates of self-reported physical health challenges are similar between those who are sheltered and unsheltered.

6. Health services needed but unable to get, by nights unsheltered



Source. 2023 Minnesota Homeless Study interviews

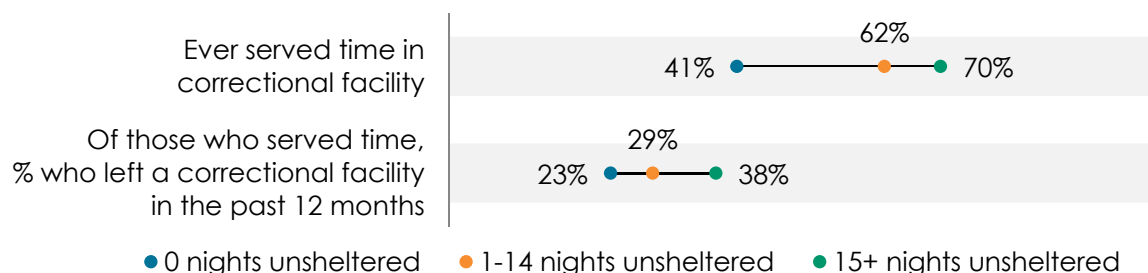
Shelters can help stabilize a person's behavioral health because there may be trained staff on-site to provide services or assist in a crisis; however, this is a level of service that not all shelters can implement or sustain. Especially for people who are unsheltered, services very clearly need to be aimed at supporting individuals' specific mental health and substance use challenges.

High rates of previous incarceration create further instability for those who are unsheltered.

Like substance use and addiction, criminal history is a destabilizing factor that increases a person's risk of homelessness, while also prolonging or worsening a person's experience with homelessness. Multiple research studies have shown a bidirectional link between incarceration and homelessness, meaning that "individuals experiencing homelessness are more likely to be incarcerated and former inmates are more likely to become homeless."⁷ A 2021 report describes the cycle of incarceration and homelessness as follows: "Individuals with justice involvement are 7-13 times more likely to experience homelessness, increasing with each instance of incarceration. The combination of limited services, limited housing opportunities, and complex health challenges contribute to the cycle of re-incarceration, greatly costing the individual and the community at large."⁸

As someone spends more time outside, the rate of previous involvement with the criminal justice system increases. In Minnesota, the majority of people who were unsheltered for 15+ nights had served time in the criminal justice system (70%), which includes county jail, workhouse, juvenile detention, state prison, or federal prison; 38% of those who served time had left a correctional facility in the past 12 months. Both proportions are higher than for those who were in shelter for the previous month (Figure 7).

7. History of incarceration, by nights unsheltered



Source. 2023 Minnesota Homeless Study interviews

Note. Correctional facilities include county jail, workhouse, juvenile detention center, state prison, and federal prison.

In looking at the smaller subset of people who were unsheltered at least half of the month *and* who had left a correctional facility in the past year, there is clear, circular movement between streets and jail. The majority of this subgroup was homeless when they entered their last correctional facility (84%) and had no stable housing when they left (71%).

Of the people who were unsheltered 15+ nights and who had served time in the past year



Source. 2023 Minnesota Homeless Study interviews

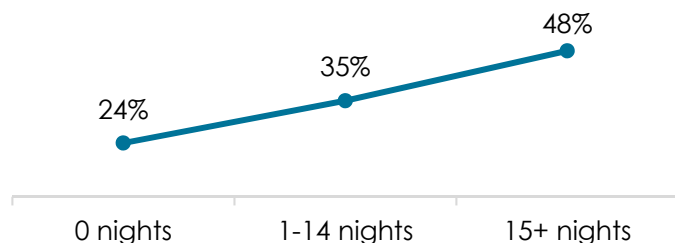
⁷ Cusack, M., & Montgomery, A. E. (2017). Examining the bidirectional association between veteran homelessness and incarceration within the context of permanent supportive housing. *Psychological services*, 14(2), 250–256. <https://doi.org/10.1037/ser0000110>

⁸ National Nurse-Led Care Consortium. (2021). *How health care center teams can address health and housing for patients involved with the justice system*.

https://nurseledcare.phmc.org/images/pdf/NCA/2021/2020_justice_involved_publication_Final.pdf

People who were unsheltered for at least half of the month were twice as likely to have a felony conviction (48%) as those who were fully sheltered for the month (24%; Figure 8).

8. Ever had a felony conviction, by nights unsheltered



Source. 2023 Minnesota Homeless Study interviews

A history of incarceration or criminal convictions can severely limit a person's ability to secure housing⁹ because many landlords bar any type of criminal background among residents. For those who were unsheltered at least half of the month, having a criminal background was the second highest barrier to getting housing, after "no affordable housing" (Figure 9).

9. Top 3 barriers to getting housing, by nights unsheltered

Ever had difficulty renting or getting housing because...	0 nights unsheltered	1-14 nights unsheltered	15+ nights unsheltered
No housing you could afford	47%	54%	54%
Criminal background	19%	31%	37%
Credit problems	33%	37%	35%

Source. 2023 Minnesota Homeless Study interviews

Unfortunately, the June 2024 Supreme Court ruling in *City of Grants Pass, Oregon v. Johnson* will have the opposite effect of what is currently needed. "Under the ruling, localities will be able to arrest, ticket, and fine people for sleeping outdoors on public property, even if leaders have failed to produce enough affordable housing or shelter for everyone in the community who needs it."¹⁰ While this type of law may reduce the visibility of unsheltered homelessness, it will almost certainly create even steeper barriers to getting housed.

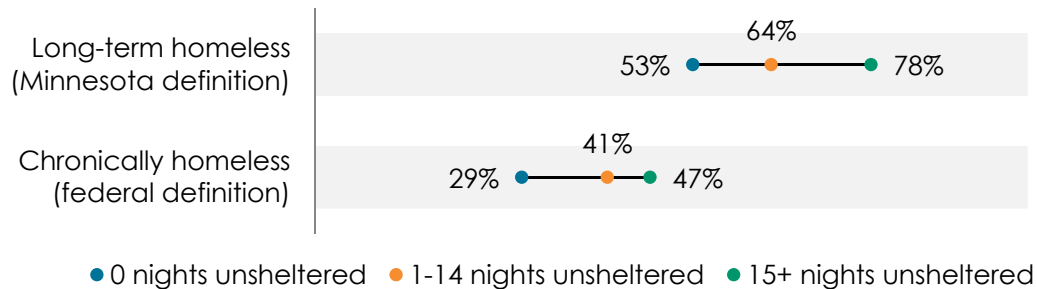
⁹ Couloute, L. (2018). *Nowhere to go: Homelessness among formerly incarcerated people*. Prison Policy Initiative. <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/housing.html>

¹⁰ National Alliance to End Homelessness. (2024). *National Alliance to End Homelessness Statement on the Supreme Court's Ruling in City of Grants Pass, Oregon v. Johnson*. <https://endhomelessness.org/blog/national-alliance-to-end-homelessness-statement-on-the-supreme-courts-ruling-in-city-of-grants-pass-oregon-v-johnson/>

The majority of Minnesota's unsheltered population is stuck in long-term homelessness.

People experiencing unsheltered homelessness were more likely to be long-term homeless (78%)—meaning they had been homeless for a year or more, or four or more times in the past three years—than those who had shelter for the past month (53%; Figure 10).

10. History of homelessness, by nights unsheltered

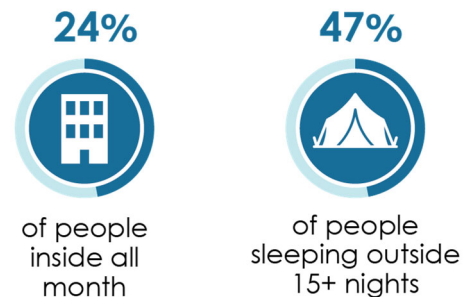


Source. 2023 Minnesota Homeless Study interviews

Note. Long-term homeless (Minnesota definition): Homeless for a year or longer currently or 4 or more times in the last 3 years. Chronically homeless (federal definition): Homeless for a year or longer currently or 4 or more times in the last 3 years and with a serious or chronic disability

The high rate of repeated and long-term homelessness indicates that there are not enough long-term, trauma-informed services to meet the complex needs of this population. People who are unsheltered continually face barriers to finding housing, and even shelter beds. For example, those who slept outside for 15+ nights out of the month were twice as likely to be turned away from shelter in the past three months, compared to those who were sheltered for the full month.

Turned away from shelter in the past month



While there is a great deal more work to do in providing services to this high-needs population, study data also indicate that people who are unsheltered are receiving important services. The Minnesota Homeless Study asks respondents about services they may have received in October 2023. Of these services, outreach and drop-in centers were among the top five most helpful services chosen by people who had slept outside for at least half of the month (Figure 11).

11. Top five most helpful services received in October 2023, people unsheltered 15+ nights

	15+ nights unsheltered
Free hot meals	45%
Food Stamps or SNAP	32%
Outreach services like a street worker	27%
Free clothes at a clothing shelf	22%
Help from drop-in centers or opportunity centers	21%

Source. 2023 Minnesota Homeless Study interviews

The increase in unsheltered homelessness over the past decade, racial disparities, and the prevalence of challenges within the unsheltered population each point to ongoing systemic failures. On their own, challenges related to substance use, mental health, or a criminal history can contribute to becoming homeless; at the same time, these issues are exacerbated as the number of nights spent outside increases, further contributing to homelessness. This deeply engraved cycle, evident by the high rates of people experiencing long-term homelessness, is nearly impossible to disrupt without intensive, holistic, trauma-informed services.

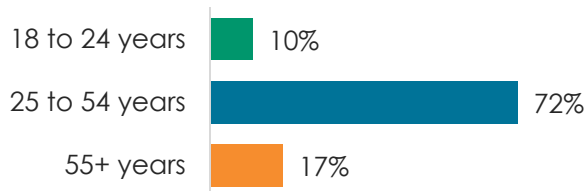
Similarly, the alarming overrepresentation of Native Americans within the unsheltered population indicates the deep need for culturally based services and solutions, while the high proportion of women who have experienced violence and exploitation speak to the need for gender-specific services. It is critical for policymakers, funders, and service providers to continue to build trusting relationships with communities, and to ground services in the cultures and experiences of those most in need of support. Only then can our state move people off of the street and into shelter and, ultimately, permanent housing. If Minnesota can get these systems and services right for people experiencing unsheltered homelessness, we will all benefit.

Wilder will continue to look at study data to highlight findings that can equip providers, advocates, and lawmakers with information to improve services and advance public policies.



Adults who are unsheltered for 15+ nights in the month

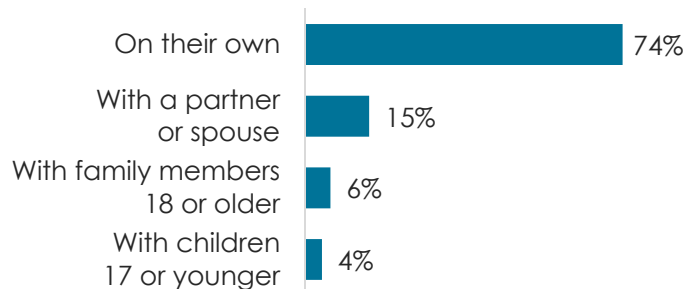
Age



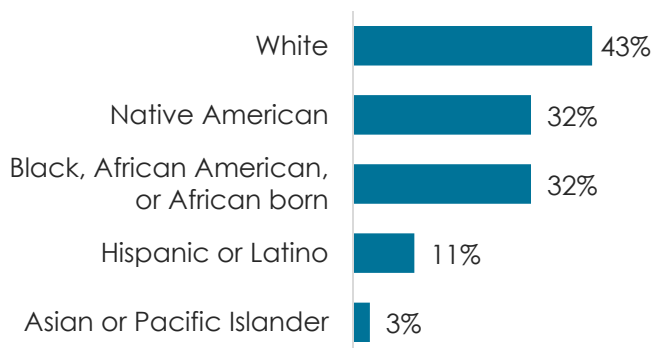
- **Average age:** 41 years old
- **Average age of first homelessness:** 26 years old
- In addition, 42 children (under 18 with their parents) were unsheltered for 15+ nights during the month.

Family structure

On the night of the study, respondents were staying:

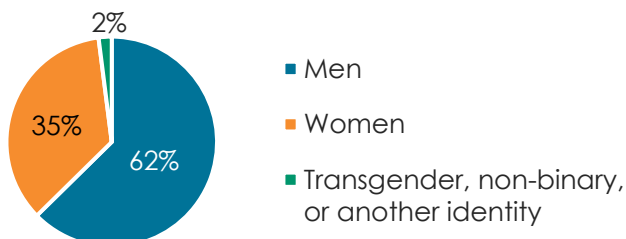


Racial and ethnic identities



Note: Respondents could choose more than one identity.

Gender identity



About the study

Every three years, Wilder Research conducts a one-day statewide study to better understand the prevalence of homelessness in Minnesota and the circumstances of those experiencing homelessness. The most recent study took place on October 26, 2023, and included:

- **Face-to-face interviews** with people throughout the state who meet a [federal definition of homelessness](#).
- **A count** of people experiencing homelessness.

In addition, six tribes in Minnesota partnered with Wilder Research to conduct the 2023 Reservation Homeless Study. This study took place during a similar time as the Minnesota Homeless Study and honors tribal ownership of their data. This report **does not include Reservation Study data**, as those data are owned by the tribes. An aggregate report on reservation homelessness will be published in 2025.

A note about sample sizes. Throughout this report, sample sizes, or Ns, vary by question. In general, weighted Ns for the three primary categories in this brief are:

- 0 nights unsheltered, n=3,547
- 1-14 nights unsheltered, n=919
- 15+ nights unsheltered, n=1,332

Readers should not try to calculate question-level Ns based on these tables. Visit mnhomeless.org for detailed, question-by-question data tables.

The study is an independent initiative of Wilder Research in partnership with public and private funders and in-kind support from service providers throughout the state. For more information about this report, call Wilder Research, 651-280-2700, or visit mnhomeless.org.

Authors: Stephanie Nelson-Dusek and Rebecca Sales

Report design: Maureen McGovern



Minnesota Homeless Study and Reservation Homeless Study:

Appropriation Request

Contact:

Director of Public Policy: Adrián Magaña adrian.magana@wilder.org

Study Co-Directors: Michelle Gerrard michelle.gerrard@wilder.org and Rebecca Sales
rebecca.sales@wilder.org

Background: Every 3 years since 1991, Wilder Research has conducted the [Minnesota Homeless Study](#). The Minnesota Homeless Study is recognized as unique in the nation for its comprehensiveness, wide-spread use, as well as its partnerships with urban, suburban, and rural community organizations and tribal nations.

In recent years, the MN Homeless Study has been in jeopardy due to the time consuming, piecemeal approach to securing funding. **At this time, the MN Homeless Study has no allocated funding starting next fiscal year. If we do not secure funding, we will have delay or discontinue the study.**

The historical nature of the study allows us to look at trends over time, and the breadth and depth of the study allows us to look more closely at the experiences of the homeless population to pinpoint barriers to obtaining safe and stable housing, and understand the experiences of specific populations, such as older adults, unaccompanied youth, Veterans, and American Indians living on reservations. Many organizations and government agencies rely on the study to identify and address systemic issues; guide services, programs, and policies to support people experiencing homelessness; and track progress in efforts to reduce and ultimately eliminate homelessness in Minnesota. The need for current and accurate data about people experiencing homelessness is particularly critical, given increases in housing instability, mental health issues, substance use, and physical health issues in recent years. The study is critical to efficiently prioritizing programming and funding to effectively address unmet population needs.

Need for funding to cover costs: The public and philanthropic landscape has changed significantly since 1991. For many years, state funding was coordinated by a lead contact who was able to navigate the complexities of agency funding to meet the study's public funding goals. However, in recent years, staff turnover and the complexities of agency financing have led Wilder to spend significant time in obtaining funding from various state agency contacts with targets that have fallen short of study needs. This process has proven inefficient for both Wilder and our State partners. Similarly, available philanthropic funds have decreased, and/or become more difficult to obtain due to the changing priorities of the philanthropic community. In addition, the Wilder Foundation has been significantly supporting the study over the years, by exempting the study from needing to cover its overhead costs. Because of the changing financial landscape, Wilder is no longer able to subsidize the study, and the overall budget of the study reflects this reality.

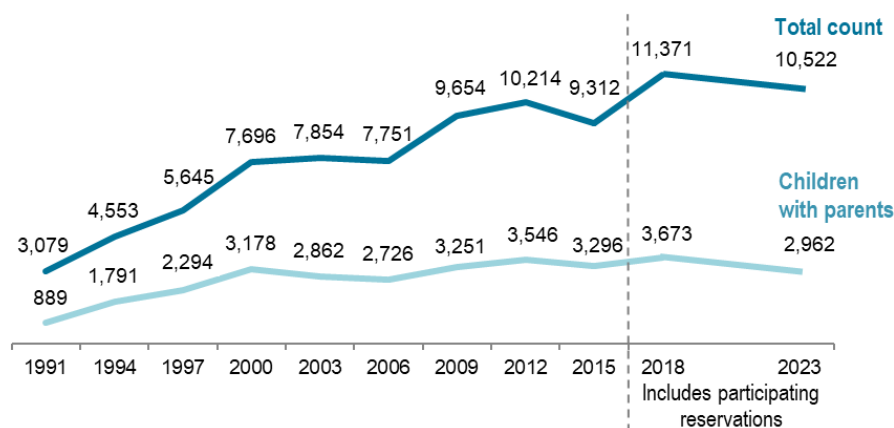
Biennium 2025-2027 Budget: The total ongoing biennium funding request is **\$1,800,000**.

The following section outlines tasks and estimated costs related to the study for the period July 2025-June 2027. Any reductions in funding will impact the scope of each activity and our ability to conduct the study.

2025-2027 Activity	Statewide study	Reservation study	Task total
Study coordination and communication with partners	\$150,000	\$75,000	\$225,000
Study design and methodology revisions	\$40,000	\$25,000	\$65,000
Outreach, engagement, and coordination with providers and tribes and other data collection costs	\$225,000	\$75,000	\$300,000
Recruit and train interviewers	\$90,000	\$25,000	\$115,000
Analysis of regional and statewide data as well as topic/population groups (populations include: youth, families, older adults, veterans, and BIPOC communities; topics include opioid use; chronic health; disabilities; and unsheltered homelessness, etc.)	\$175,000	\$75,000	\$250,000
Reporting (written reports and data tables)	\$185,000	\$75,000	\$260,000
Data use decision making workshops; presentations to policy makers and funders; public presentations; consultation on special issues; special rural briefs and regional presentations	\$100,000	\$50,000	\$150,000
Integration/alignment with other statewide data sources to increase efficiency	\$95,000	\$20,000	\$115,000
Other expenses for 2025-27			
Incentives for interview participants and participating tribes (Reservation Study)			\$200,000
Vendors and consultants such as translation services, bulk printing, and data scanning, etc.			\$75,000
Statewide travel and meeting expenses			\$30,000
Postage and mailing			\$15,000
Total costs			\$1,800,000

Data snapshot

10,522 people experienced homelessness in Minnesota on the night of the 2023 Minnesota Homeless Study. While this represents a 7% decrease from 2018, it is the second highest number since the study began





2309 Nicollet Avenue, Minneapolis, MN 55404
612-874-0311 main | **612-874-0313** fax



March 27, 2025

To: Co-Chair Noor, Co-Chairs Schomacker, and members of the Human Services Finance and Policy Committee

From: Kyle Hanson, Executive Director, Agate Housing and Services

Co-Chair Noor, Co-Chairs Schomacker, and Committee Members:

I am writing on behalf of Agate Housing and Services to express our strong support for HF 2276, appropriating funding for the Minnesota Homeless Study. The study has been a critical resource in understanding and addressing homelessness in Minnesota since 1991. It is unique in the United States in its partnership with tribal communities, as well as the comprehensive nature of the publicly available data collected over more than 30 years. The study is used to prioritize needs, identify systemic issues, and improve programs and policies to address homelessness in our state. Investment into this study represents incredible value, as the information is used to leverage and prioritize multiple other policies for Minnesotans impacted by homelessness and ensure that investments made are impactful long-term.

Without the Wilder study, we would lack crucial information that helps us to leverage private funding and measure the efficacy of our work.

The Minnesota Homeless Study and the companion Reservation Homeless Study are invaluable resources for anyone working to address homelessness and housing instability across the state. This includes state, county, and city officials, homeless service providers who are on the front lines supporting those individuals and communities most impacted by homelessness, and organizations that homeless individuals and families access for non-housing related services, such as healthcare, transportation services, and schools. Agate Housing and Services, calls on the committee to pass HF 2276 to ensure that the state continues to benefit from the insights provided by Minnesota Homeless Study data.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kyle Hanson', written over a white background.

Kyle Hanson
Executive Director
Agate Housing and Services



March 27, 2025

To: Co-Chair Noor, Co-Chair Schomacker, and members of the Human Services Finance and Policy Committee

From: Craig Freeman, Director of Development, Alliance Housing, Inc.

Co- Chair Noor, Co-Chair Schomacker, and Committee Members:

I am writing on behalf of Alliance Housing, Inc. to express our strong support for HF 2276, appropriating funding for the Minnesota Homeless Study. The study has been a critical resource in understanding and addressing homelessness in Minnesota since 1991. It is unique in the United States in its partnership with tribal communities, as well as the comprehensive nature of the publicly available data collected over more than 30 years. The study is used to prioritize needs, identify systemic issues, and improve programs and policies to address homelessness in our state. An investment into this study represents incredible value, as the information is used to leverage and prioritize multiple other policies for Minnesotans impacted by homelessness and ensure that investments made are impactful long-term.

The Minnesota Homeless Study is absolutely essential to both how Alliance performs our work and how it is funded. The demographic numbers found in the study aid us in determining what type of housing is most needed now and what is likely to be needed in the future. For example, the Study makes it clear that senior homelessness is increasing. We can then factor this information into the planning process for future buildings. At the same time, knowing why people are experiencing homelessness is incredibly useful in determining our rental policies. Knowing that of 2023 respondents, 46% reported difficulty finding a home due to affordability, 31% due to credit issues, 20% due to an eviction, and 22% due to criminal history, informs Alliance's commitment to screening in, rather than out, those facing these barriers.

Additionally, having access to the Study's data is vital to obtaining foundation, corporate, and individual giving. The data is a central part of most Alliance grant applications because it allows us to demonstrate to donors exactly how our work impacts the community. We are thereby able to bring in private money that lessens the amount we, and every other housing organization, need from the State to provide the vital service of housing Minnesota's population.

The Minnesota Homeless Study and the companion Reservation Homeless Study are invaluable resources for anyone working to address homelessness and housing instability across the state. This includes state, county, and city officials, homeless service providers who are on the front lines supporting those individuals and communities most impacted by homelessness, and organizations that homeless individuals and families access for non-housing related services, such as healthcare, transportation services, and schools. Alliance Housing, Inc., calls on the committee to pass HF 2276 to ensure that the state continues to benefit from the insights provided by Minnesota Homeless Study data.

Sincerely,

Craig Freeman
Director of Development

Alliance Housing, Inc.



March 25, 2025

Co-Chair Noor, Co-Chairs Schomacker, and members of the Human Services Finance and Policy Committee,

I am writing to express our strong support for HF 2276, which appropriates funding for the Minnesota Homeless Study conducted by Wilder Research. This study has been a pivotal resource in understanding and tackling homelessness in Minnesota since 1991. Its collaboration with tribal communities and the depth of publicly available data it provides is unparalleled in the United States. For over three decades, this study has helped shape priorities, identify systemic barriers, and enhance programs and policies aimed at reducing homelessness across our state. Investing in this study is not only prudent but ensures that we continue to make informed and impactful decisions to support Minnesotans affected by homelessness.

At Avenues for Youth, the data from the Minnesota Homeless Study has been instrumental in our strategic planning and service delivery. It allows us to gauge the effectiveness of our interventions and tailor our services to the evolving needs of youth experiencing homelessness, including those from marginalized communities. The insights gained have empowered us to secure funding and support for our initiatives, demonstrating the tangible benefits of data-driven decision-making. If this study were to end, our ability to advocate for and implement effective solutions would be significantly hindered, risking the progress we have made in addressing youth homelessness in our community.

The Minnesota Homeless Study, along with the companion Reservation Homeless Study, are indispensable tools for a broad spectrum of stakeholders. This includes state, county, and city officials, frontline service providers, and organizations that support homeless individuals and families in accessing critical non-housing related services such as healthcare, transportation, and education. We, at Avenues for Youth, urge the committee to pass HF 2276 to ensure the continuation of these vital resources.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "K. Meerse", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Katherine Meerse
Executive Director



April 3rd, 2025

RE: HF2276

Chair Noor, Chair Schomacker and members of the Human Services Finance and Policy Committee,

I am writing on behalf of the Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative to express our strong support for Rep. Kozlowski's bill, which appropriates funding for the Minnesota Homeless Study. The study has been a critical resource in understanding and addressing homelessness in Minnesota since 1991. It is unique in the United States in its partnership with tribal communities, as well as the comprehensive nature of the publicly available data collected over more than 30 years. The study is used to prioritize needs, identify systemic issues, and improve programs and policies to address homelessness in our state. Investment in this study represents incredible value, as the information is used to leverage and prioritize multiple other policies for Minnesotans impacted by homelessness, ensuring that investments made are impactful in the long term.

Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative is a nonprofit housing provider and developer with 24 buildings that offer affordable homes to over 1,200 people. We primarily operate supportive housing, which provides safe, affordable, and stable housing with on-site services for the most vulnerable Minnesotans who have experienced homelessness.

Permanent supportive housing, also referred to as "supportive housing," provides safe, affordable, and stable housing with on-site services. Housing is available to families, individuals, and unaccompanied youth and young adults who are at risk of or are already experiencing homelessness. The goal is for residents to gain stability, maintain their housing, and achieve their personal goals.

The Minnesota Homeless Study and its companion, the Reservation Homeless Study, are invaluable resources for anyone working to address homelessness and housing instability across the state. This includes state, county, and city officials, as well as homeless service providers who are on the front lines supporting those individuals and communities most impacted by homelessness. Additionally, it encompasses organizations that homeless individuals and families access for non-housing related services, such as healthcare, transportation services, and schools.

Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative calls on the committee to pass HF 2276 to ensure that the state continues to benefit from the insights provided by the Minnesota Homeless Study data.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Benjamin Helvick Anderson".

Benjamin Helvick Anderson
VP of Policy and Organizing
Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative



March 27th, 2025

RE: HF 2276 Minnesota homeless study money transfer and appropriation

Co- Chair Noor, Co-Chair Schomacker, and Committee Members,

I am writing on behalf of the Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative to express our strong support for Sen. Hoffman's bill, SF 2214, which appropriates funding for the Minnesota Homeless Study. The study has been a critical resource in understanding and addressing homelessness in Minnesota since 1991. It is unique in the United States in its partnership with tribal communities, as well as the comprehensive nature of the publicly available data collected over more than 30 years. The study is used to prioritize needs, identify systemic issues, and improve programs and policies to address homelessness in our state. Investment in this study represents incredible value, as the information is used to leverage and prioritize multiple other policies for Minnesotans impacted by homelessness, ensuring that investments made are impactful in the long term.

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The Minnesota Homeless Study and its companion, the Reservation Homeless Study, are invaluable resources for anyone working to address homelessness and housing instability across the state. This includes state, county, and city officials, as well as homeless service providers who are on the front lines supporting those individuals and communities most impacted by homelessness. Additionally, it encompasses organizations that homeless individuals and families access for non-housing related services, such as healthcare, transportation services, and schools.

Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative calls on the committee to pass HF 2276 to ensure that the state continues to benefit from the insights provided by Minnesota Homeless Study data.

Thank You,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Benjamin Helvick Anderson".

Benjamin Helvick Anderson
VP of Policy and Organizing
Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative



CATHOLIC CHARITIES
Twin Cities.

Catholic Charities at Elliot Park
1007 East 14th Street, Minneapolis, MN 55404
612-204-8500 | cctwincities.org

Date: March 27, 2024

To: Co-Chair Noor, Co-Chairs Schomacker, and members of the Human Services Finance and Policy Committee

From: Mary Callaghan, Interim Director of Performance and Quality Assurance, Catholic Charities Twin Cities

Co-Chair Noor, Co-Chairs Schomacker, and Committee Members:

I am writing on behalf of **Catholic Charities Twin Cities** to express our strong support for HF 2276, appropriating funding for the Minnesota Homeless Study. The study has been a critical resource in understanding and addressing homelessness in Minnesota since 1991. It is unique in the United States in its partnership with tribal communities, as well as the comprehensive nature of the publicly available data collected over more than 30 years. The study is used to prioritize needs, identify systemic issues, and improve programs and policies to address homelessness in our state. An investment into this study represents incredible value, as the information is used to leverage and prioritize multiple other policies for Minnesotans impacted by homelessness and ensure that investments made are impactful long-term.

Our organization routinely uses the information provided by the Minnesota Homeless Study to better understand the life histories and service needs of our clients and their ongoing barriers to housing. For many years now, we have drawn on rich descriptive information the study provides to inform our service delivery models, raise funds, and shape our advocacy activities. The Minnesota Homeless Study offers critical statewide insights and assists Catholic Charities in providing targeted and responsive services to our clients.

The Minnesota Homeless Study and the companion Reservation Homeless Study are invaluable resources for anyone working to address homelessness and housing instability across the state. This includes state, county, and city officials, homeless service providers who are on the front lines supporting those individuals and communities most impacted by homelessness, and organizations that homeless individuals and families access for non-housing related services, such as healthcare, transportation services, and schools. **Catholic Charities Twin Cities** calls on the committee to pass HF 2276 to ensure that the state continues to benefit from the insights provided by Minnesota Homeless Study data.

Sincerely,

Mary Callaghan
Interim Director of Performance and Quality Assurance
Catholic Charities Twin Cities



P (612)359-6216 F (612)359-6210
WWW.FREYFOUNDATIONMN.ORG

5000 WELLS FARGO CENTER | 90 SOUTH 7TH STREET | MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55402

March 27, 2025

To: Co-Chair Noor, Co-Chairs Schomacker, and members of the Human Services Finance and Policy Committee

From: Brian Pittman and Flor Frey, Frey Foundation of Minnesota

Co-Chair Noor, Co-Chairs Schomacker, and Committee Members:

I am writing on behalf of The Frey Foundation of Minnesota to express our strong support for HF 2276, appropriating funding for the Minnesota Homeless Study. The study has been a critical resource in understanding and addressing homelessness in Minnesota since 1991. It is unique in the United States in its partnership with tribal communities, as well as the comprehensive nature of the publicly available data collected over more than 30 years. The study is used to prioritize needs, identify systemic issues, and improve programs and policies to address homelessness in our state. We ask that the state of Minnesota join the Frey Foundation of Minnesota's investment in this research.

Over the last 27 years, the Frey Foundation has invested more than \$75 million to support housing stability, education, and related services in Twin Cities metro communities. We invest in Minnesota Homeless Study because it represents incredible value that ensures effective investments and interventions in those communities. In partnership with our community grantees, the work to achieve our vision of a more equitable, strong, and self-sufficient community would not be possible without the deeply valuable Minnesota Homeless Study data.

- Our grantee partners use the data in their applications and to plan their strategies and services. The study equips these organizations to not only tell the top-line story of need in the state of Minnesota but gives the depth and granularity of data to effectively show how their interventions will address key aspects of the issue.
- We use the data to help coordinate strategies and funding through partnerships like the Heading Home Funders Collaborative. When working with other philanthropic foundations that fund housing and homelessness services, it is not only important to know what each other is doing, but how we can coordinate our funding to best address key issues. The study data allows us to see our funding in relationship to the needs of the community.
- The study supports a community of data and practice that drives innovation and effectiveness in the sector. Being in community with practitioners, funders, and government agencies, we have witnessed that the study findings and data are frequently at the center of the conversation, discourse, and planning about how to improve the lives of Minnesotans.

The Minnesota Homeless Study and the companion Reservation Homeless Study are invaluable resources for anyone working to address homelessness and housing justice across the state. The Frey Foundation of Minnesota calls on the committee to pass SF HF 2276 to ensure that the state continues to benefit from the insights provided by Minnesota Homeless Study data.

Sincerely,
Brian Pittman, Impact Director | Housing
Flor Frey, President
Frey Foundation of Minnesota



LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR HOMELESS STUDY |

March 27, 2025

To: Co-Chair Noor, Co-Chairs Schomacker, and members of the Human Services Finance and Policy Committee

From: Julee Jackson, Outreach Coordinator, Grace House Itasca Area Homeless Shelter

Co-Chair Noor, Co-Chairs Schomacker, and Committee Members:

I am writing on behalf of Grace House, Itasca Area Homeless Shelter to express our strong support for HF 2276, appropriating funding for the Minnesota Homeless Study. The study has been a critical resource in understanding and addressing homelessness in Minnesota since 1991. It is unique in the United States in its partnership with tribal communities, as well as the comprehensive nature of the publicly available data collected over more than 30 years. The study is used to prioritize needs, identify systemic issues, and improve programs and policies to address homelessness in our state. An investment into this study represents incredible value, as the information is used to leverage and prioritize multiple other policies for Minnesotans impacted by homelessness and ensure that investments made are impactful long-term.

The Wilder Study is used to gather in-depth information on what homelessness looks like in Minnesota. We use this study to better understand what rural homelessness looks like in greater Minnesota. The results are used for planning and implementing programs to help end homelessness. If this study ended, we would not have access to the qualitative data that it provides that is used in many of our grants. Housing providers could potentially lose funding for essential housing services such as shelter if the Wilder Study ends.

The Minnesota Homeless Study and the companion Reservation Homeless Study are invaluable resources for anyone working to address homelessness and housing instability across the state. This includes state, county, and city officials, homeless service providers who are on the front lines supporting those individuals and communities most impacted by homelessness, and organizations that homeless individuals and families access for non-housing related services, such as healthcare, transportation services, and schools. The Grace House Itasca Area Homeless Shelter, calls on the committee to pass HF 2276 to ensure that the state continues to benefit from the insights provided by Minnesota Homeless Study data.

Sincerely,

Julee Jackson
Outreach Coordinator
Grace House, Itasca Area Homeless Shelter



Greater Twin Cities
UNITED WAY

March 27, 2025

Dear Co-Chair Noor, Co-Chairs Schomacker, and members of the Human Services Finance and Policy Committee,

I am writing on behalf of Greater Twin Cities United Way to express our strong support for HF 2276, appropriating funding for the Minnesota Homeless Study. The study has been a critical resource in understanding and addressing homelessness in Minnesota since 1991. It is unique in the United States in its partnership with tribal communities, as well as the comprehensive nature of the publicly available data collected over more than 30 years. The study is used to prioritize needs, identify systemic issues, and improve programs and policies to address homelessness in our state. An investment into this study represents incredible value, as the information is used to leverage and prioritize multiple other policies for Minnesotans impacted by homelessness and ensure that investments made are impactful long-term.

The Minnesota Homeless Study and the companion Reservation Homeless Study are invaluable resources for anyone working to address homelessness and housing instability across the state. At Greater Twin Cities United Way, we recognize that the level of detail in the Minnesota Homeless Study is truly unparalleled in the housing field, helping us to target programs and investments toward the communities most impacted by homelessness and housing instability. We call on this committee to pass HF 2276 to ensure that the state continues to benefit from the insights provided by the Minnesota Homeless Study data.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephannie L. Lewis", is written over a horizontal line.

Stephannie L. Lewis

Associate Vice President, Advocacy & Community Impact

Greater Twin Cities United Way



March 27, 2025

Minnesota State Capitol
Capitol G3
75 Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155

RE: Minnesota Homeless Study (HF 2276)

Dear Co-Chair Noor, Co-Chairs Schomacker, and members of the Human Services Finance and Policy Committee,

I write to express Hearth Connection's enthusiastic support of Wilder Research's funding request for the Minnesota Homeless Study.

As you know, in unique collaboration with Minnesota's tribal nations, this study is used to prioritize needs, identify systemic issues, and improve programs and policies to address our homelessness challenges. The Minnesota Homeless Study and the companion Reservation Homeless Study are invaluable resources for Hearth Connection as we seek to identify and advance long-term, actionable solutions to homelessness in our communities.

We are deeply appreciative of the Wilder Research team's commitment to this important work and encourage you and your committee members to ensure its passage during the 2025 legislative session.

Thank you for your efforts to address Minnesota's housing and homelessness challenges, and for your public service.

Sincerely,

Marcus Schmit
Executive Director



8011 34th Ave S., Suite 126
Bloomington, MN 55425
Office Phone: 612.728.5770
Office Fax: 612.728.5761
www.homelinemn.org

To: Co-Chair Noor, Co-Chairs Schomacker, and members of the Human Services Finance and Policy Committee

From: Michael Dahl, Public Policy Director, HOME Line

Date: March 27, 2025

I am writing on behalf of HOME Line to express our strong support for House File 2276, appropriating funding for the Minnesota Homeless Study. The study has been a critical resource in understanding and addressing homelessness in Minnesota since 1991. It is unique in the United States in its partnership with tribal communities, as well as the comprehensive nature of the publicly available data collected over more than 30 years. The study is used to prioritize needs, identify systemic issues, and improve programs and policies to address homelessness in our state. An investment into this study represents incredible value, as the information is used to leverage and prioritize multiple other policies for Minnesotans impacted by homelessness and ensure that investments made are impactful long-term.

For context of the impact that the Minnesota Homeless Study has on our organization, HOME Line provides free legal advice through our tenant hotline to ensure that tenants throughout Minnesota can solve their own rental housing problems. The tenants who call us face a variety of issues that directly impact their ability to remain in their homes, including eviction concerns, emergency repairs, and discrimination during the rental screening process. Having the capacity to track incidents of homelessness proves vital to HOME Line's understanding of how a variety of factors within the housing continuum contributes to housing stability – and this would not be possible without the extensive data provided by the Minnesota Homeless Study.

The Minnesota Homeless Study and the companion Reservation Homeless Study are invaluable resources for anyone working to address homelessness and housing instability across the state. This includes state, county, and city officials, homeless service providers who are on the front lines supporting those individuals and communities most impacted by homelessness, and organizations that homeless individuals and families access for non-housing related services, such as healthcare, transportation services, and schools. HOME Line, calls on the committees to pass House File 2276 and its eventual companion in the Minnesota House to ensure that the state continues to benefit from the insights provided by Minnesota Homeless Study data.



03/27/2025

To: Co-Chair Noor, Co-Chairs Schomacker, and
members of the Human Services
Finance and Policy Committee
From: Rozanne Casey KOOTASCA Community Action Director of Housing

Co-Chair Noor, Co-Chairs Schomacker, and Committee Members:

I am writing on behalf of KOOTASCA to express our strong support for HF 2276, appropriating funding for the Minnesota Homeless Study. The study has been a critical resource in understanding and addressing homelessness in Minnesota since 1991. It is unique in the United States in its partnership with tribal communities, as well as the comprehensive nature of the publicly available data collected over more than 30 years. The study is used to prioritize needs, identify systemic issues, and improve programs and policies to address homelessness in our state. Investment in this study represents incredible value, as the information is used to leverage and prioritize multiple other policies for Minnesotans impacted by homelessness and ensure that investments made are impactful long-term.

KOOTASCA uses the data collected from the study to support on-going funding and during the RFP application process of future funding. The Wilder Homeless Study is a data source that provides a thorough picture of quantitative data, that locally we can support with qualitative data. This study opens a segway for opportunities of conversations with folks experiencing homelessness that can be shared locally and nationally.

The Minnesota Homeless Study and the companion Reservation Homeless Study are invaluable resources for anyone working to address homelessness and housing instability across the state. This includes state, county, and city officials, homeless service providers who are on the front lines supporting those individuals and communities most impacted by homelessness, and organizations that homeless individuals and families access for non-housing related services, such as healthcare, transportation services, and schools. KOOTASCA Community Action calls on the committee to pass HF 2276 to ensure that the state continues to benefit from the insights provided by Minnesota Homeless Study data.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rozanne M Casey".

WWW.KOOTASCA.ORG

Grand Rapids Office
822 NE 5th Ave
Grand Rapids, MN 55744

Phone: 218-999-0800
877-687-1163

International Falls Office
900 5th St, Suite 304
International Falls, MN 56649

Phone: 218-283-9491
800-559-9491



102 W. 1st Street
Duluth, MN 55802

OFFICE (218) 722-7431
FAX (218) 722-0850

LIFEHOUSEDULUTH.ORG

March 27, 2025

To: Co- Chair Noor, Co-Chairs Schomacker, and members of the Human Services Finance and Policy Committee:

I am writing on behalf of Life House to express our strong support for HF 2276, appropriating funding for the Minnesota Homeless Study (MHS). The study has been a critical resource in understanding and addressing homelessness in Minnesota since 1991. It is unique in the United States in its partnership with tribal communities, as well as the comprehensive nature of the publicly available data collected over more than 30 years. The study is used to prioritize needs, identify systemic issues, and improve programs and policies to address homelessness in our state. An investment into this study represents incredible value, as the information is used to leverage and prioritize multiple other policies for Minnesotans impacted by homelessness and ensure that investments made are impactful long-term.

Life House has been working with unhoused and under-resourced youth since 1991. Currently we serve 800+youth per year across four programs: the Drop-in Youth Center, Housing, Mental Health & Wellness, and Futures Education & Employment. Over decades, Life House has utilized the MHS to assess community needs to shape programmatic and organizational goals which have addressed youth housing needs in our community. Currently, Life House case manages 50 units of housing. Life House has also utilized the data as a comparison to our internal data, strengthening strategic direction and funding cases for support. If the study ended it would be detrimental to our organization because we leverage the data to look for and address trends. One helpful component the MHS provides is a breakdown of data for youth across various regions of the state as well as marginalized communities of youth such as youth of color and LGBTQ youth.

The Minnesota Homeless Study and the companion Reservation Homeless Study are invaluable resources for anyone working to address homelessness and housing instability across the state. This includes state, county, and city officials, homeless service providers who are on the front lines supporting those individuals and communities most impacted by homelessness, and organizations that homeless individuals and families access for non-housing related services, such as healthcare, transportation services, and schools. Life House calls on the committee to pass HF 2276 to ensure that the state continues to benefit from the insights provided by Minnesota Homeless Study data.

Sincerely,

Amber Sadowski
Executive Director
amber.sadowski@life-house.org
218-722-7431 x111

Here today. Here tomorrow.



03/27/2025

To: Co-Chair Noor, Co-Chairs Schomacker, and members of the Human Services Finance and Policy Committee

From: Nathaniel Saltz, Chief Program Officer, Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans

Co-Chair Noor, Co-Chairs Schomacker, and Committee Members:

I am writing on behalf of Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans to express our strong support for HF 2276, appropriating funding for the Minnesota Homeless Study. The study has been a critical resource in understanding and addressing homelessness in Minnesota since 1991. It is unique in the United States in its partnership with tribal communities, as well as the comprehensive nature of the publicly available data collected over more than 30 years. The study is used to prioritize needs, identify systemic issues, and improve programs and policies to address homelessness in our state. Investment in this study represents incredible value, as the information is used to leverage and prioritize multiple other policies for Minnesotans impacted by homelessness and ensure that investments made are impactful long-term. Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans uses the data from this study to track trends and identify and address needs in the veteran homelessness response system.

The Minnesota Homeless Study and the companion Veteran Homeless Study are invaluable resources for anyone working to address homelessness and housing instability across the state. This includes state, county, and city officials, homeless service providers who are on the front lines supporting those individuals and communities most impacted by homelessness, and organizations that homeless individuals and families access for non-housing related services, such as healthcare, transportation services, and schools. The Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans calls on the committee to pass HF 2276 to ensure that the state continues to benefit from the insights provided by Minnesota Homeless Study data.

Sincerely,

Nathaniel Saltz
Chief Program Officer
Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans



Metro Transit Police Department

560 Sixth Avenue North, Minneapolis, MN 55411 | 612-349-7200
metrotransit.org/police | Facebook & Instagram: @MetroTransitPD | X: @MTPDMN



LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR HOMELESS STUDY

3/27/25

To: **Co-Chair Noor, Co-Chairs Schomacker, and members of the Human Services Finance and Policy Committee**

From: **Metro Transit Police Homeless Action Team (HAT)**

Co-Chair Noor, Co-Chairs Schomacker, and Committee Members:

I am writing on behalf of HAT to express our strong support for HF 2276, appropriating funding for the Minnesota Homeless Study. The study has been a critical resource in understanding and addressing homelessness in Minnesota since 1991. It is unique in the United States in its partnership with tribal communities, as well as the comprehensive nature of the publicly available data collected over more than 30 years. The study is used to prioritize needs, identify systemic issues, and improve programs and policies to address homelessness in our state. An investment into this study represents incredible value, as the information is used to leverage and prioritize multiple other policies for Minnesotans impacted by homelessness and ensure that investments made are impactful long-term.

As a Sergeant with the Metro Transit Police Department I lead the Homeless Action Team, which has been in existence since 2018 and has helped hundreds of Minnesotans find housing. Our team rides our public transportation routes, respectfully connecting with riders who are using trains and buses for warmth and safety. While they might be reluctant to trust one of my officers, they often will feel more comfortable with our outreach partners from non-profits that heavily rely on funding from grants. The data that the Homeless Study provides is highly necessary to support applications for such grants.

The Homeless Study is also important because we use the data to back our financial requests for supplies and for contracting services/partners, which we do every year. This data is more important than ever for us, and many other organizations, in a time when homelessness is increasing, and service providers are struggling to keep up.

The Minnesota Homeless Study and the companion Reservation Homeless Study are invaluable resources for anyone working to address homelessness and housing instability across the state. This includes state, county, and city officials, homeless service providers who are on the front lines supporting those individuals and communities most impacted by homelessness, and organizations that homeless individuals and families access for non-housing related services, such as healthcare, transportation services, and schools. The Homeless Action Team, calls on the committee to pass HF 2276 to ensure that the state continues to benefit from the insights provided by Minnesota Homeless Study data.

Sincerely,

Sgt. Beverly Rodriguez, MTPD Homeless Action Team

Co-Chair Noor, Co-Chairs Schomacker, and Committee Members:

The MN Coalition for the Homeless (MCH) is a statewide organization dedicated to advocating for policies and resources to end homelessness. I am writing on behalf of to express our strong support for HF 2276, appropriating funding for the Minnesota Homeless Study. The study has been a critical resource in understanding and addressing homelessness in Minnesota since 1991. It is unique in the United States in its partnership with tribal communities, as well as the comprehensive nature of the publicly available data collected over more than 30 years. The study is used to prioritize needs, identify systemic issues, and improve programs and policies to address homelessness in our state. An investment into this study represents incredible value, as the information is used to leverage and prioritize multiple other policies for Minnesotans impacted by homelessness and ensure that investments made are impactful long-term.

MCH and our member organizations rely on this study to give an accurate representation of the current state of homelessness in Minnesota. The method used in the study is far superior to other homeless counts and provides much more tangible evidence of whether we are making progress in ending homelessness or not. MCH in particular uses this information to help set our legislative agenda and to educate key decision makers on the causes and solutions for homelessness. Without this information, Minnesota would not be able to prove their investments are working OR show the need for more investments to end homelessness.

The Minnesota Homeless Study and the companion Reservation Homeless Study are invaluable resources for anyone working to address homelessness and housing instability across the state. This includes state, county, and city officials, homeless service providers who are on the front lines supporting those individuals and communities most impacted by homelessness, and organizations that homeless individuals and families access for non-housing related services, such as healthcare, transportation services, and schools. MCH calls on the committee to pass HF 2276 to ensure that the state continues to benefit from the insights provided by Minnesota Homeless Study data.

Sincerely,

Matt Traynor

Interim Executive Director & Director of Advocacy
MN Coalition for the Homeless

March 27, 2025

To: Co-Chair Noor, Co-Chairs Schomacker, and members of the Human Services Finance and Policy Committee

From: Minnesota Tribal Collaborative

Co-Chair Noor, Co-Chairs Schomacker, and Committee Members:

I am writing on behalf of the Minnesota Tribal Collaborative which represents ten tribes in Minnesota (Bois Forte, Fond du Lac, Grand Portage, Leech Lake, Lower Sioux, Mille Lacs, Prairie Island, Red Lake, Upper Sioux, and White Earth) who work together to prevent and end homelessness for American Indians. The Minnesota Tribal Collaborative is very supportive of HF 2276, appropriating funding for the Minnesota Homeless Study. The study has been a critical resource in understanding and addressing homelessness in Minnesota since 1991. In 2006, a companion survey, Homeless and Near Homeless on American Indian Reservations was conducted and provided data for tribal nations to prevent and end homelessness for their communities. This was the first time a study of this type was done in the United States and in partnership with tribal communities. This study not only resulted in new data but in promising practices of how to work collaboratively and respectfully with tribal nations. Since 2006 the data collected from the Homeless and Near Homeless on American Indian Reservations survey, has been used to prioritize needs, identify systemic issues, and improve programs and policies to address homelessness in our state. After the 2006 data was collected, Minnesota tribes used the data to develop the first in the U.S.A. tribal plans to prevent and end homelessness. From the work of developing plans the tribes formed the Minnesota Tribal Collaborative which is a unique collaboration of tribes working together to access resources, funding, and best practices to address homelessness on and off reservations.

The Minnesota Homeless Study and the companion Reservation Homeless Study are invaluable resources for anyone working to address homelessness and housing instability across the state. This includes state, tribal, county, city officials, and homeless service providers who are on the front lines supporting those individuals and communities most impacted by homelessness. The information collected also informs organizations that homeless individuals and families access for non-housing related services, such as healthcare, transportation services, and schools. An investment in this study represents incredible value, as the information is used to leverage resources and prioritize policies for Minnesotans impacted by homelessness and ensure that investments made are impactful long-term.

The Minnesota Tribal Collaborative, calls on the committee to pass HF 2276 to ensure that the state continues to benefit from the insights provided by Minnesota Homeless Study data.

Sincerely,

Christina Olsen, Coordinator Minnesota Tribal Collaborative

March 27, 2025

To: Co-Chair Noor, Co-Chairs Schomacker, and members of the Human Services Finance and Policy Committee

From: Monica Nilsson, thirty year leader in homeless and housing programs

Dear Co-Chair Noor, Co-Chairs Schomacker, and Committee Members,

Homeless people are mostly men. They are located mostly in Minneapolis and St. Paul. Most of those homeless have drug or alcohol problems.

These conclusions can often be what Minnesotans believe without data. It's what we think we see because we don't know how to point to a 10 year old and say, "There's a homeless person."

The reality is Minnesota is finding an increase in older adults who are homeless, 4 of 10 homeless Minnesotans are children and youth and 47% of homeless Minnesotans are families. Most sadly, 33% of people experiencing homelessness in Minnesota don't even have safe sleep in a formal shelter. In 2023, there was a smaller proportion of people not in a formal shelter in the Twin Cities metro (18%), compared to greater Minnesota (32%).

How do we know this? Because of the work of Wilder Research. As a leader in direct service programming to people experiencing homelessness, a community educator and frequent media contact, I am writing to express strong support for HF 2276, appropriating funding for the Minnesota Homeless Study led by Wilder Research. I have been in the work of moving children and adults out of homelessness for over 30 years. I have watched the impact Wilder Research data has, in educating the public, the media, philanthropy and elected officials.

Since 1991, Wilder Research data has provided non-partisan information for decision makers, donors and volunteers to understand where support is needed. Data has been especially important in suburban, rural and greater Minnesota communities where homelessness isn't a group of people under a bridge or people living with severe mental illness walking in isolation.

In my time leading programs, conducting community engagement and educating leaders, whether a new legislator, Pastor or reporter, I have relied on Wilder Research to provide unbiased information. Data is not subjective.

As Board Chair of the statewide Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless for nearly a decade, I found the Minnesota Homeless Study and the companion Reservation Homeless Study to be the most comprehensive data source in Minnesota-and the most trusted.

99.8% of Minnesotans will have a safe place to sleep tonight. We can improve the issue of homelessness in our state and it starts with having data we respect and trust. I ask the committee to pass HF 2276 to ensure that the state continues to benefit from the insights provided by Minnesota Homeless Study data.

Sincerely,

Monica Nilsson



March 25, 2025

To: Co- Chair Noor, Co-Chairs Schomacker, and members of the Human Services Finance and Policy Committee

From: Rozanne Casey, Chair, Northeast Minnesota Continuum of Care

Co-Chair Noor, Co-Chairs Schomacker, and Committee Members:

I am writing on behalf of the Northeast Minnesota Continuum of Care (NE CoC) to express our strong support for HF 2276, appropriating funding for the Minnesota Homeless Study. The study has been a critical resource in understanding and addressing homelessness in Minnesota since 1991. It is unique in the United States in its partnership with tribal communities, as well as the comprehensive nature of the publicly available data collected over more than 30 years. The study is used to prioritize needs, identify systemic issues, and improve programs and policies to address homelessness in our state. An investment into this study represents incredible value, as the information is used to leverage and prioritize multiple other policies for Minnesotans impacted by homelessness and ensure that investments made are impactful long-term.

The NE CoC and our member agencies rely on the data from the Wilder study to inform planning for our homeless response system, apply for grant funding, and make programmatic changes to better align with the needs of those experiencing homelessness in our region. This study has been invaluable to our planning and advocacy efforts for ending homelessness across the region. This study helps us make data-driven decisions, identify gaps in services, and advocate for necessary resources to improve our homeless response system.

The Minnesota Homeless Study and the companion Reservation Homeless Study are invaluable resources for anyone working to address homelessness and housing instability across the state. This includes state, county, and city officials, homeless service providers who are on the front lines supporting those individuals and communities most impacted by homelessness, and organizations that homeless individuals and families access for non-housing related services, such as healthcare, transportation services, and schools. The NE CoC calls on the committee to pass HF 2276 to ensure that the state continues to benefit from the insights provided by Minnesota Homeless Study data.

Sincerely,

Rozanne Casey
Chair
Northeast Minnesota Continuum of Care



P.O. Box 542, Little Falls, MN 56345 • 320.632.9140 •
oasiscmdirector@outlook.com • <https://oasiscentralmn.org>

March 27, 2025

To: Co-Chair Noor, Co-Chairs Schomacker, and members of the Human Services Finance and Policy Committee

From: Rose Surma, Executive Director, Oasis Central Minnesota

Co-Chair Noor, Co-Chairs Schomacker, and Committee Members:

I am writing on behalf of Oasis Central Minnesota to express our strong support for HF 2276, which allocates funding for the Minnesota Homeless Study. Since 1991, this study has been an essential tool in understanding and addressing homelessness across the state. Its comprehensive, publicly available data—collected over three decades—has provided critical insights that drive meaningful change. Notably, this study is unique in its collaboration with tribal communities, setting it apart as a national model.

The data gathered through this study plays a vital role in identifying urgent needs, uncovering systemic barriers, and shaping effective policies and programs to address homelessness in Minnesota. Funding this study represents a high-value investment, as the insights it generates help guide strategic decisions, maximize resources, and ensure that efforts to combat homelessness are both effective and sustainable.

Oasis Central Minnesota provides emergency shelter and housing case management for both families and individuals experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity in Morrison County, Minnesota. Since we began this work a decade ago, data from the Minnesota Homeless Study has been instrumental in shaping our programs. This data informs the development of effective, targeted initiatives that address the root causes of homelessness and housing instability—leading to higher success rates in long-term housing stability and reducing the length of shelter stays for participants. Additionally, the study's data strengthens our ability to secure both public and private funding by ensuring our requests are well-informed, appropriately scaled, and aligned with the evolving needs of our community. Homelessness and housing insecurity are complex, rapidly changing challenges. Without continued funding for this study, we would face significant obstacles in both program delivery and securing the necessary resources to meet the full scope of our community's needs.

The Minnesota Homeless Study, along with its companion Reservation Homeless Study, is an indispensable resource for those addressing homelessness and housing instability. Its insights inform the work of state, county, and local governments, frontline service providers, and organizations that serve individuals and families experiencing homelessness whether through housing assistance, healthcare, education, or transportation services.

Oasis Central Minnesota urges the committee to approve HF2276 to ensure that Minnesota continues to benefit from this critical research, which drives informed, effective solutions for homelessness across our state.

Respectfully,

Rose Surma
Executive Director

April 2, 2025

Co-Chairs Schomacker and Noor and Members of the Human Services Finance and Policy committee,

OutFront Minnesota is our state's largest LGBTQ+ advocacy organization and we write in support of HF 2276 - appropriating money for the Minnesota homeless study.

The study has been a critical resource in understanding and addressing homelessness in Minnesota since 1991. It is unique in the United States in its partnership with tribal communities, as well as the comprehensive nature of the publicly available data collected over more than 30 years. The study is used to prioritize needs, identify systemic issues, and improve programs and policies to address homelessness in our state. An investment into this study represents incredible value, as the information is used to leverage and prioritize multiple other policies for Minnesotans impacted by homelessness and ensure that investments made are impactful long-term.

2SLGBTQIA+ communities are uniquely impacted by housing instability and at a time when federal data sources around our communities are diminishing, state investments in this work and research are important to ensuring we can communicate needs and target limited state resources towards the best work.

Studies like this can help to inform organizational engagement and partnerships across communities and government agencies - including state, county, and city officials, homeless service providers who are on the front lines supporting those individuals and communities most impacted by these needs.

We encourage your support for HF 2276, and the important work it would sustain.

Sincerely,

Kat Rohn
Executive Director
OutFront Minnesota.



March 25, 2025

To: Co-Chair Noor, Co-Chairs Schomacker, and members of the Human Services Finance and Policy Committee

From: Janayah Bagurusi, Sr Director of Resident Services at Project for Pride in Living

Co-Chair Noor Co-Chairs Schomacker, and Committee Members:

I am writing on behalf of Project for Pride in Living to express our strong support for HF 2276, appropriating funding for the Minnesota Homeless Study. The study has been a critical resource in understanding and addressing homelessness in Minnesota since 1991. It is unique in the United States in its partnership with tribal communities, as well as the comprehensive nature of the publicly available data collected over more than 30 years. The study is used to prioritize needs, identify systemic issues, and improve programs and policies to address homelessness in our state. An investment into this study represents incredible value, as the information is used to leverage and prioritize multiple other policies for Minnesotans impacted by homelessness and ensure that investments made are impactful long-term.

Project for Pride in Living owns and manages approximately 1600 units of housing, and we provide permanent supportive housing with services to approximately 800 of those households annually. The results of the homeless study directly impact our work by helping us understand the populations being the most affected so we can align our services and/or partnerships to best meet the needs of the community. As with many organizations, we rely on this data to apply for funding proposals, to help inform our work around improving systems and shaping policy, and to meet our mission of creating safe, resilient neighborhoods where residents are thriving, and their voices are heard.

The Minnesota Homeless Study and the companion Reservation Homeless Study are invaluable resources for anyone working to address homelessness and housing instability across the state. This includes state, county, and city officials, homeless service providers who are on the front lines supporting those individuals and communities most impacted by homelessness, and organizations that homeless individuals and families access for non-housing related services, such as healthcare, transportation services, and schools. Project for Pride in Living respectfully calls on the committee to pass HF 2276 to ensure that the state continues to benefit from the insights provided by Minnesota Homeless Study data.

Sincerely,

Janayah B.

Janayah Bagurusi
Senior Director of Resident Services
Project for Pride in Living





March 25, 2025

To: Co-Chair Noor, Co-Chairs Schomacker, and members of the Human Services Finance and Policy Committee

From: Pam Stegora Axberg, CEO of Union Gospel Mission Twin Cities

Co-Chair Noor, Co-Chairs Schomacker, and Committee Members:

I am writing on behalf of Union Gospel Mission Twin Cities to express our strong support for HF 2276, appropriating funding for the Minnesota Homeless Study. The study has been a critical resource in understanding and addressing homelessness in Minnesota since 1991. It is unique in the United States in its partnership with tribal communities, as well as the comprehensive nature of the publicly available data collected over more than 30 years. The study is used to prioritize needs, identify systemic issues, and improve programs and policies to address homelessness in our state. An investment into this study represents incredible value, as the information is used to leverage and prioritize multiple other policies for Minnesotans impacted by homelessness and ensure that investments made are impactful long-term.

We use the information from this study as we improve our programs and services for people experiencing homelessness, hunger, and addiction. The information from this study allows us to understand the needs of the community we serve and adjust our services to meet those needs specifically. It also allows us to communicate to our donors the impact of their philanthropy on the very real needs of our area. We have learned through this study vital demographics, details about populations experiencing homelessness, and what it will take to ensure that Minnesota is among the top states in the country addressing homelessness. Should this study end, it would be highly detrimental to our ability to know how we can better serve the community. Put simply, people would fall through the cracks.

The Minnesota Homeless Study and the companion Reservation Homeless Study are invaluable resources for anyone working to address homelessness and housing instability across the state. This includes state, county, and city officials, homeless service providers who are on the front lines supporting those individuals and communities most impacted by homelessness, and organizations that homeless individuals and families access for non-housing related services, such as healthcare, transportation services, and schools. Union Gospel Mission Twin Cities, calls on the committee to pass HF 2276 to ensure that the state continues to benefit from the insights provided by Minnesota Homeless Study data.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Pam Stegora Axberg".

Pam Stegora Axberg
CEO, Union Gospel Mission Twin Cities

LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR HOMELESS STUDY

March 25, 2025

To: Co-Chair Noor, Co-Chairs Schomacker, and members of the Human Services Finance and Policy Committee

Co-Chair Noor, Co-Chairs Schomacker, and Committee Members:

I am reaching out on behalf of YSN to voice our strong support for HF 2276, which allocates funding for the Minnesota Homeless Study. Since 1991, this study has been an essential tool in understanding and addressing homelessness across the state. It stands out nationally for its collaboration with tribal communities and the depth of publicly available data collected over more than 30 years. The study helps identify needs, uncover systemic barriers, and shape more effective programs and policies. Investing in this research is a smart, high-impact decision; it informs and strengthens multiple policies affecting Minnesotans experiencing homelessness, ensuring that resources are used effectively for long-term change.

For organizations like those in YSN's network, this study is more than just data it is an essential tool that drives decision-making at every level. Our partners rely on this information to strengthen grant applications and fundraising efforts, ensuring they can sustain and expand services for youth experiencing homelessness. It also plays a key role in shaping best practices, helping organizations refine their programs based on real, long-term trends rather than assumptions.

Beyond the value of the data itself, Wilder Research has been an outstanding community partner in this work. Their commitment to collaboration and transparency ensures that the study reflects the realities of those experiencing homelessness and provides actionable insights. Their approach fosters trust and engagement across service providers, policymakers, and communities.

We strongly urge continued investment in this critical study to ensure Minnesota has the data-driven insights needed to make meaningful progress in addressing homelessness. YSN calls on the committee to pass HF 2276 to ensure that the state continues to benefit from the insights provided by Minnesota Homeless Study data.

Sincerely,

Corey Magstadt, Director, Youth Services Network representing our member organizations.

