

Yakima County Annual Point in Time Community Report

2021

YAKIMA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
THE HOMELESS NETWORK OF YAKIMA COUNTY

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Acknowledgements

The Yakima County Annual Point In Time Report 2021 was developed out of a collaborative effort among public and private organizations to create a report of the population experiencing homelessness in Yakima County. This long collaborative effort could not have happened without the ongoing participation and support of the following organizations, associations, and partnerships.

Local Government

This included, but is not limited to, the current Board of County Commissioners:

- District 1 Commissioner Amanda McKinney
- District 2 Commissioner Ron Anderson
- District 3 Commissioner LaDon Linde

Additional partnership with the following units of government for making this year's count a success:

- The Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation
- City of Yakima
- City of Sunnyside
- City of Toppenish
- City of Wapato

Survey Takers

Due to COVID-19, the 2021 Point in Time was unable to utilize volunteers from the community. However, multiple agencies provided staff to conduct surveys including the following:

- | | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| • Alex Cordova | • Heather Hoffman | • Nikki Brown |
| • Alysa Belew | • Herminia Magdalene | • Patty Bengé |
| • Antonio Mades | • Isaiah Williamson | • Randi Chally |
| • Asuncion Marquez | • Jack McCarthy | • Ray Hernandez |
| • Bill Daughtery | • Jade Tillequots | • Sasha Corpino |
| • Carlos Campos | • Janet Kerns | • Sasha Corpuz |
| • Catherine Owings | • Jenece Howe | • Shealynn Reuther |
| • Chelsey Bell | • Jennifer Mata | • Sheri Rynd |
| • Cheyenne Clapper | • Jerry Farrell | • Susie Ceja |
| • Crystal Nambo | • Jesus Campos | • Suzi Carpino |
| • Daisy Gutierrez | • Joannie Treuzo | • Tabitha Rowe |
| • Darlene Finder | • Lance Larsen | • Taylor Tahkeal |
| • Darlene Hansen | • Lee Murdock | • Tina Cardenas |
| • David Castaneda | • Lori Tamburro | • Tony Madera |
| • David Wells | • Maria Peralez | • Veronica Alcaraz |
| • Daylene Finder | • Megan Popurza | • Victor Meraz |
| • Esther Kay | • Michelle Morris | • Wes Michael |
| • Esther Magasis | • Mike Kay | |
| • Frank Ramirez | • Mitzi Duenas | |

Providers

Providers were integral to having an accurate Shelter Count, measuring those who are currently housed by local programs. Each provider updated the number of units and beds they have for reporting to the Washington State Department of Commerce. Thank you to the service providers who completed shelter counts or survey forms:

- Generating Hope
- Grace City Outreach
- Rod's House
- Triumph Treatment Services
- Yakima Union Gospel Mission
- Yakama Nation
- Yakima Neighborhood Health Services
- Yakima YWCA

Introduction

The Point in Time count, also referred to as 'PIT' or simply 'the count', is conducted annually throughout Yakima County to estimate the number of people experiencing homelessness on a single night in our communities. The local PIT count is part of a nationwide data collection effort required by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Data collection for the count comes from two sources:

- A **Sheltered Count** covering the homeless population staying in housing of various types that is dedicated to serving the homeless.
- An **Outreach Count** that attempts to reach the homeless or at risk wherever they may be located within the community.

There are other households that are perhaps on the cusp of homelessness but have managed to avoid it. Although they may be unstably or poorly housed, since they are not literally homeless, they are not tallied in the PIT.

Shelter Count

A large part of the count includes individuals in Emergency Shelter and Transitional Housing. There are fluctuations in how many units and beds are available based on a variety of issues including funding, capacity of local organizations, and systemwide shifts. To ensure all the units and beds in Yakima County were included in the count, the following steps were taken:

1. Providers were sent a form prior to count to confirm how many beds/units they provided, what type of shelter it was (Emergency Shelter or Transitional Housing), and specifically what population they served such as Single Men and Women, Families, Veterans, Etc.
2. After collecting the information from providers, the results were confirmed with the Washington State Department of Commerce for accuracy.
3. Once surveys were printed, they were distributed to providers based on the inventory they reported. Each survey was numbered and tracked regarding who received it and who returned the completed surveys.
4. Once data input from all the surveys was complete, attendance reports were pulled from the local Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and compared with the survey results. Staff then worked with local providers to confirm that both the HMIS data and the survey results matched.

- a. For organizations that did not utilize HMIS (e.g., Yakima Union Gospel Mission), rosters for the night of the count were provided and compared against the survey results.

Data results were then analyzed to identify any potential duplicates which were removed from the data set. This was a minimal number.

Outreach Count

Due to COVID-19, the County was unable to conduct a Project Homeless Connect event. In response, and in accordance with guidance from Commerce, the Outreach Count was extended to one week. This count was conducted by trained outreach workers and the results were then analyzed to ensure that everyone was only counted once.

Point in Time Data

This section displays the data collected during the PIT 2021. The two main ways to categorize data is by individuals and by households. The following table shows the number of households and individuals counted during PIT 2021:

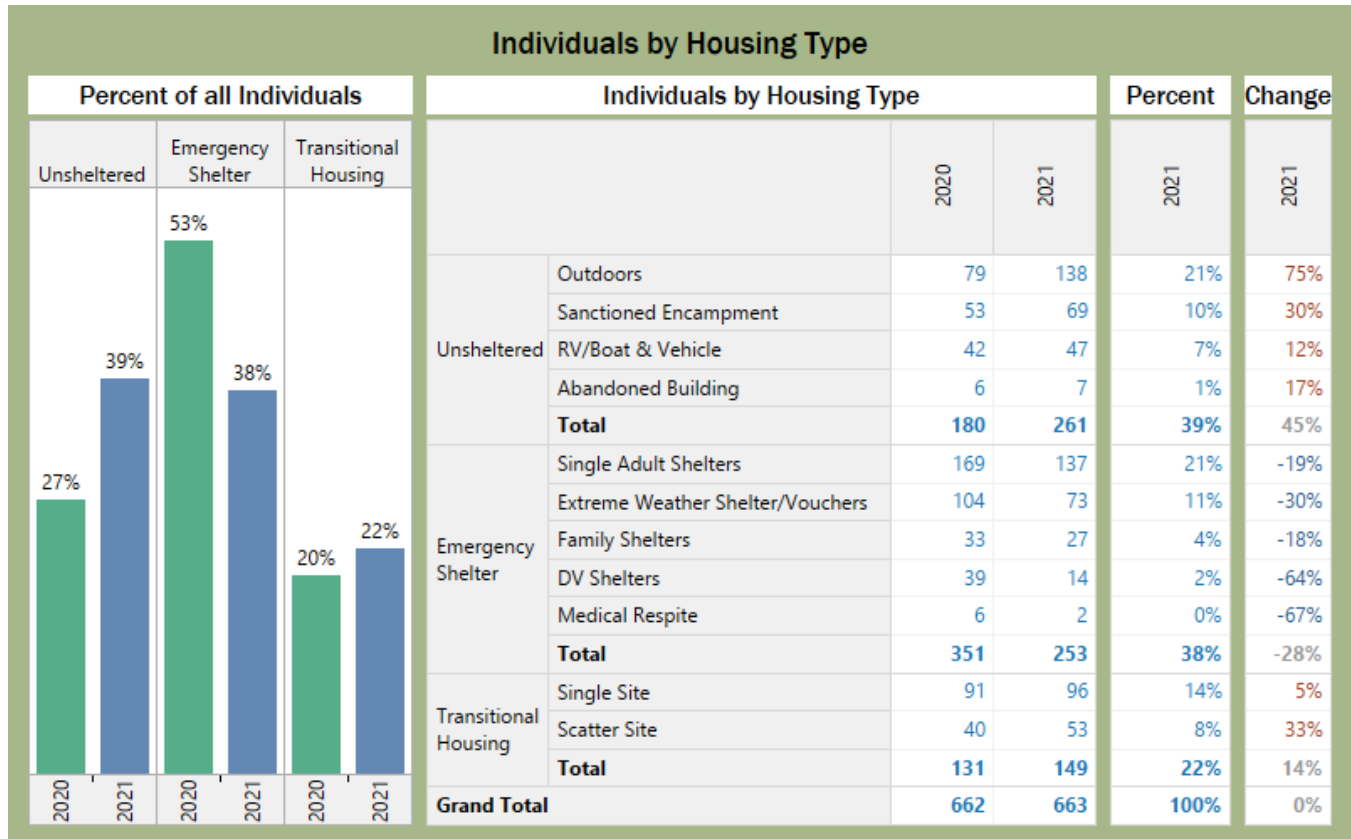
Category	Individuals	Households
Currently Homeless	663	553
Not Currently Homeless	39	38
Total surveyed	702	591

Not Homeless

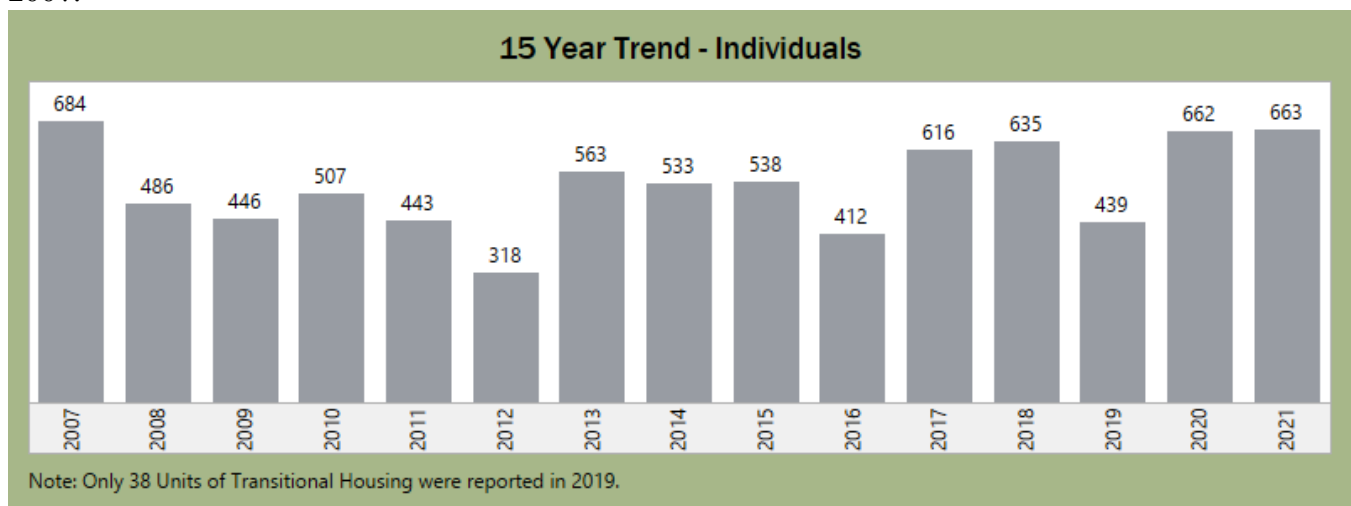
Of the 702 individuals surveyed, 39 were not experiencing homelessness on that day. Only one of those individuals was in stable housing, with the other 38 either couch surfing or in unstable housing. Couch surfing is defined as when a person is staying with family or friends on a temporary basis – this can be an indicator of individuals on the cusp of entering or re-entering homelessness. Twenty-four of the individuals not experiencing homelessness, or 61%, had been served at some point by a homeless service provider. No additional analysis was conducted on this population group.

Homeless Individuals

In 2021, 663 individuals were identified as experiencing homelessness; only one additional person compared to 2020's 662. However, there was a noticeable shift in where people experiencing homelessness were sleeping. More than 1 in 3 individuals, or 39% counted, were unsheltered; an increase of 81 individuals compared to 2020.

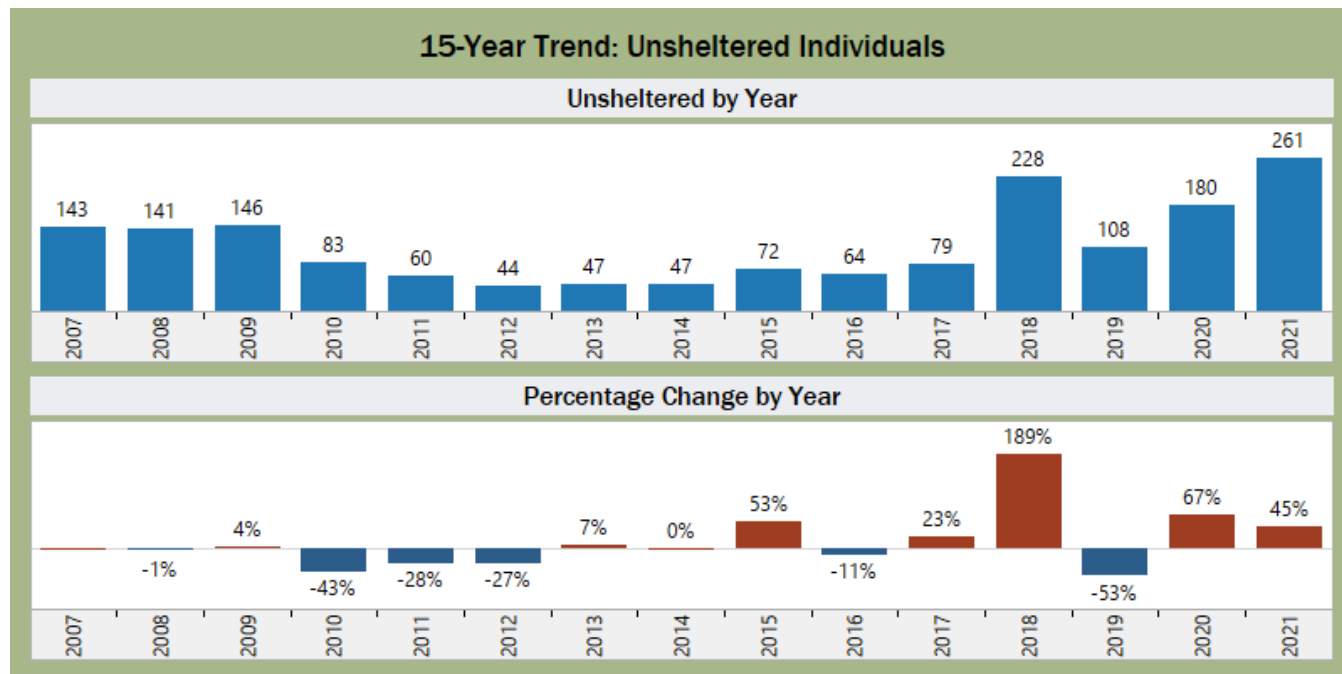


This section looks at various demographics of individuals by the following housing types; 1) Unsheltered: Sleeping outdoors, vehicles, and sanctioned encampments; 2) Temporarily Sheltered: Emergency Shelter and Transitional Housing. The following chart shows the overall count since 2007.

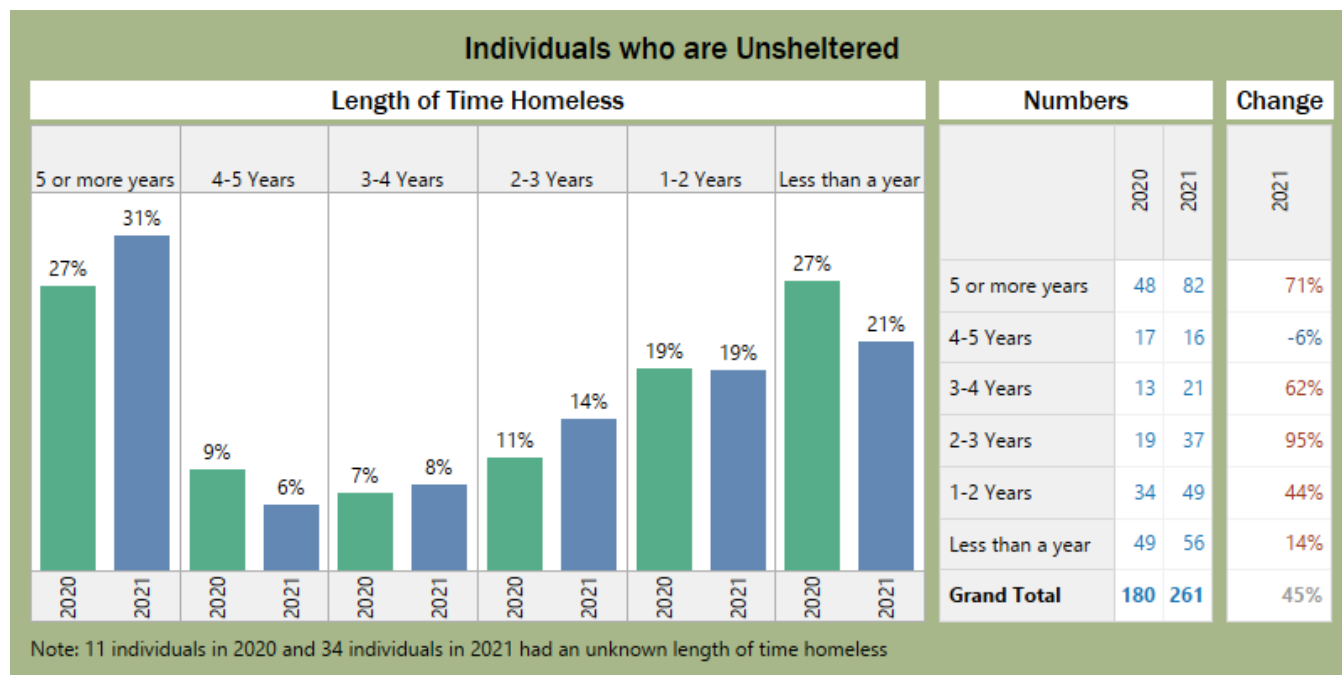


Unsheltered

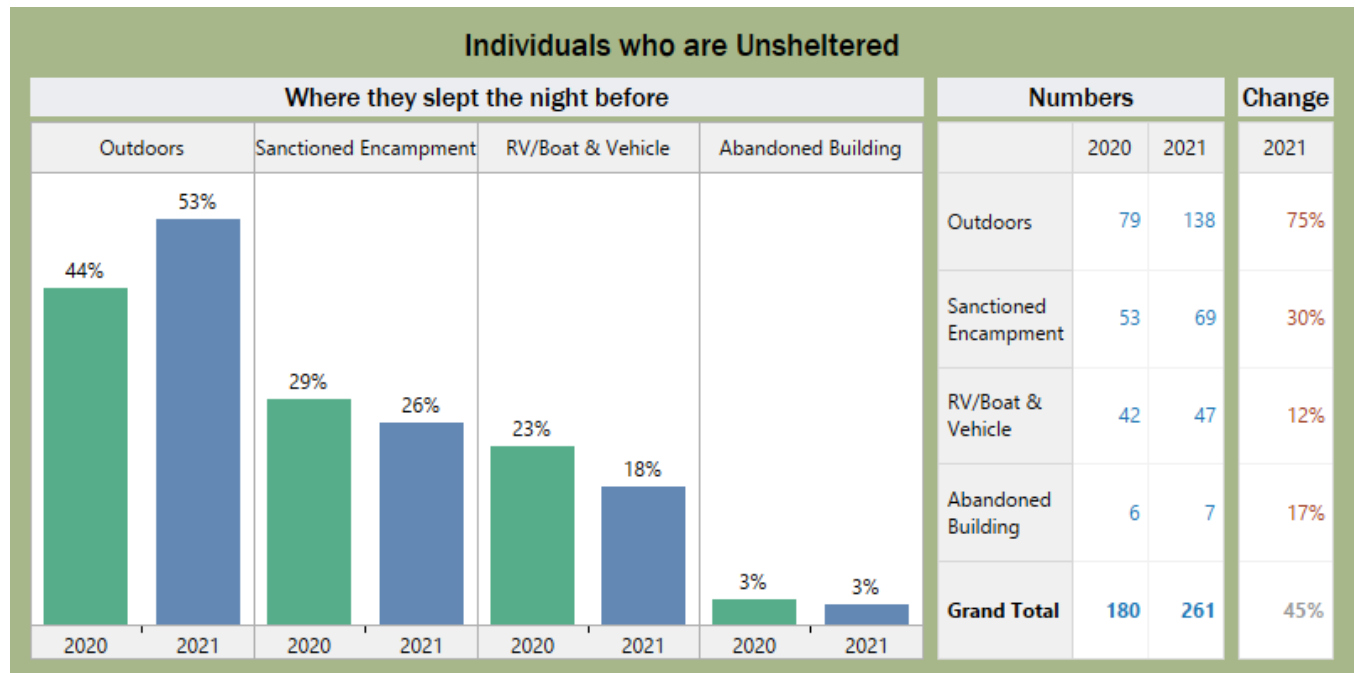
The term unsheltered includes individuals in encampments, both sanctioned and unsanctioned, as well as those sleeping in vehicles or RVs without running water. In 2021, there was a 45% increase in the number of individuals who were unsheltered from 2020.



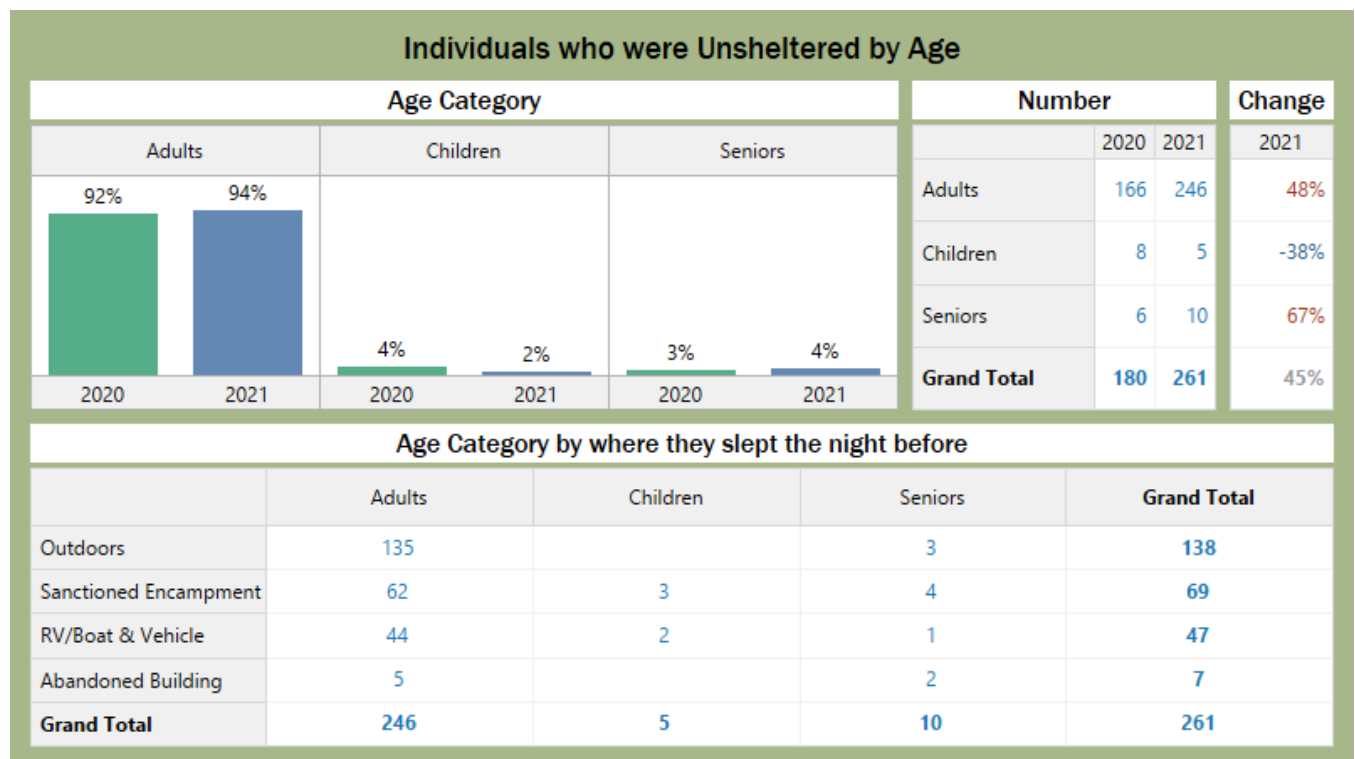
In Yakima County, 261 individuals were identified as unsheltered; only 21% had been homeless less than a year; in contrast to 27% the year prior.



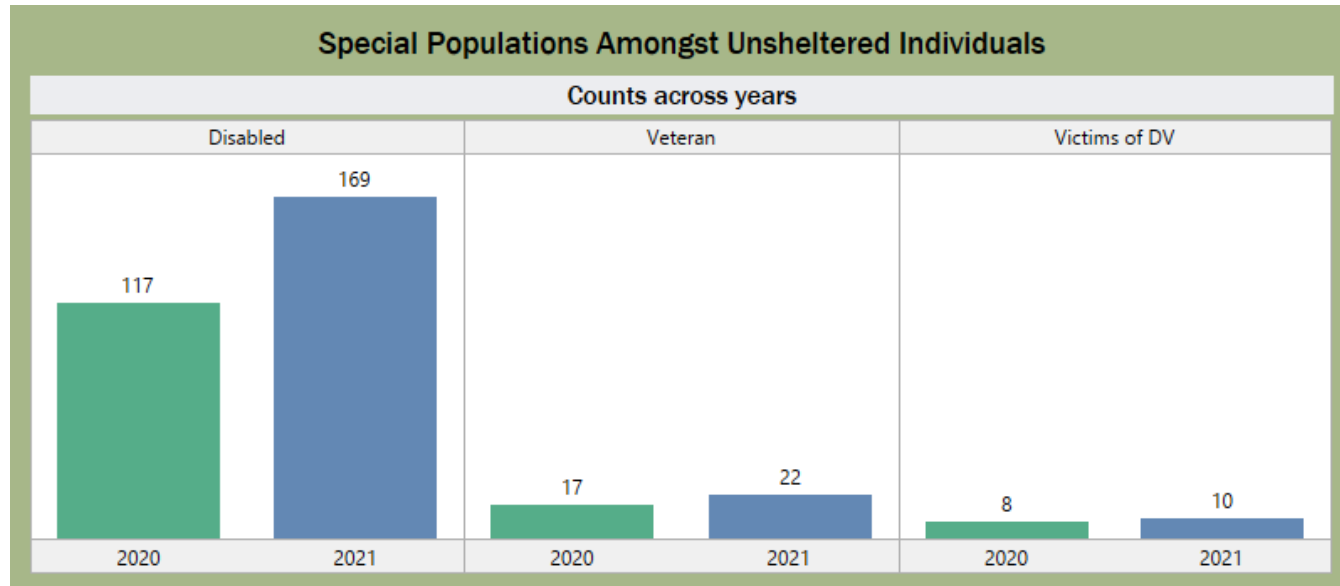
In 2021, there was a shift from sheltered to unsheltered homelessness, with a 75% increase in the number of individuals who were sleeping outdoors.



In 2021, a majority of those unsheltered were adults under the age of 65.

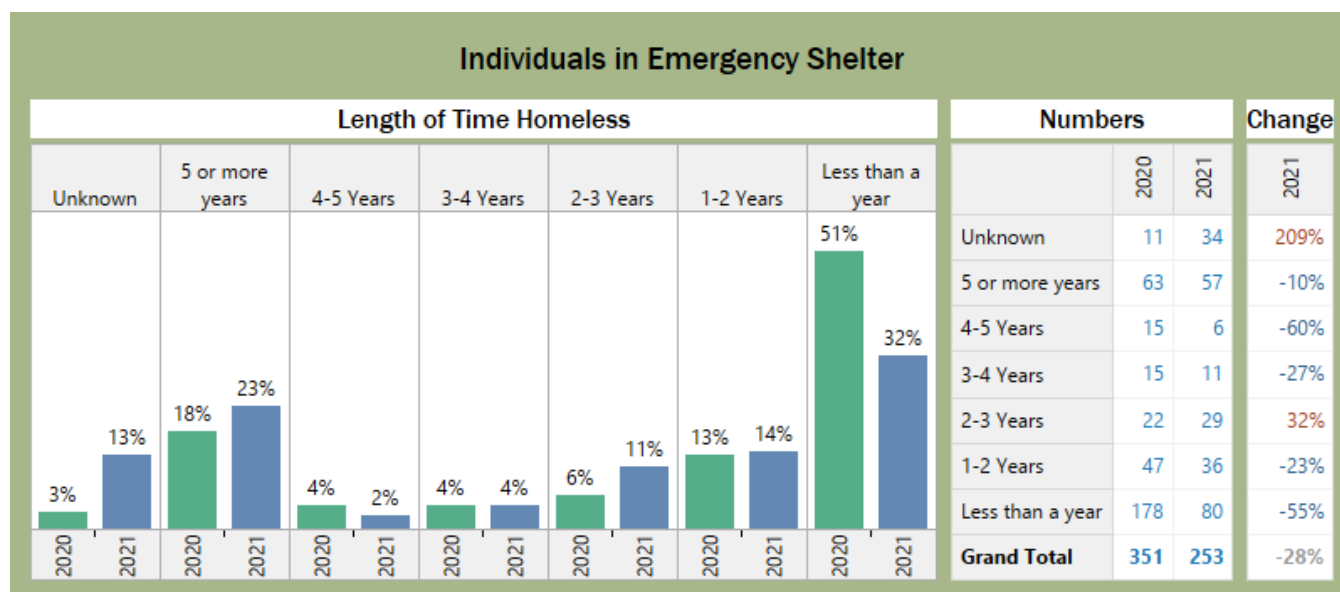


In 2021, the number of individuals who were unsheltered and experiencing a disability increased 44% from 2020¹.



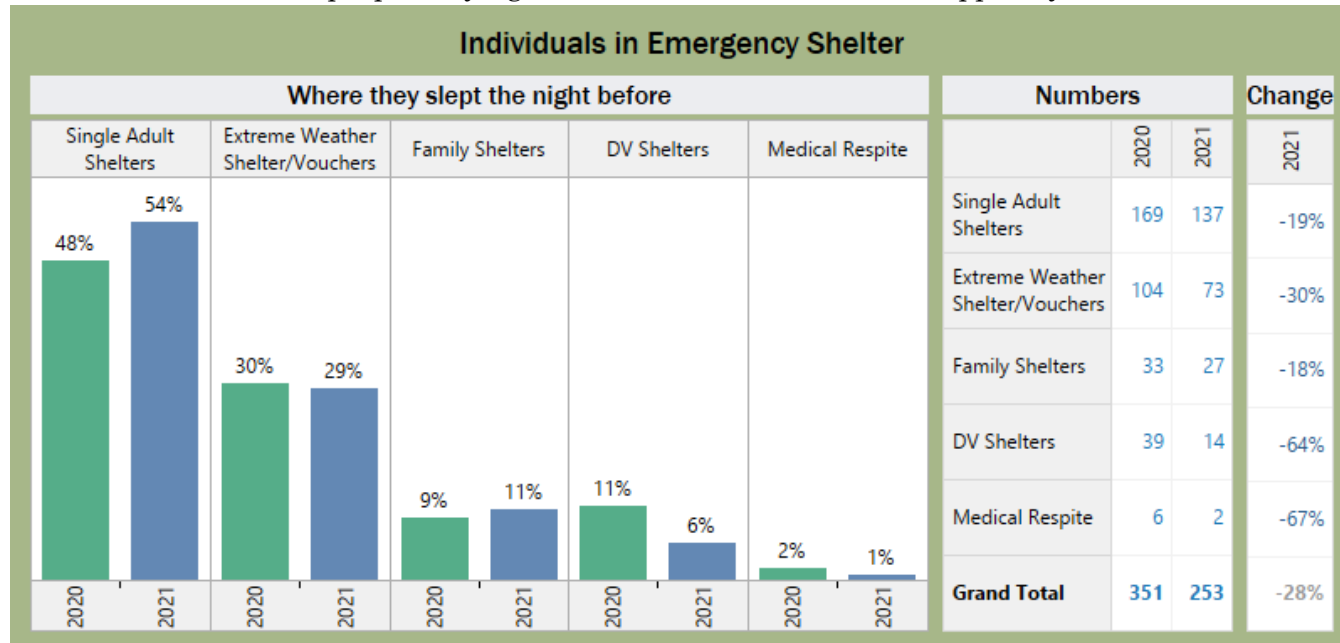
Sheltered

Individuals who are sheltered included those in Emergency Shelter and those in Transitional Housing. Descriptions of each are included in the appendix. In Yakima County, 253 individuals were staying in an emergency shelter the night before the count. This was a reduction of people in shelter by 28%. 32% of individuals in shelter became homeless less than year ago, compared to over 50% the year prior.

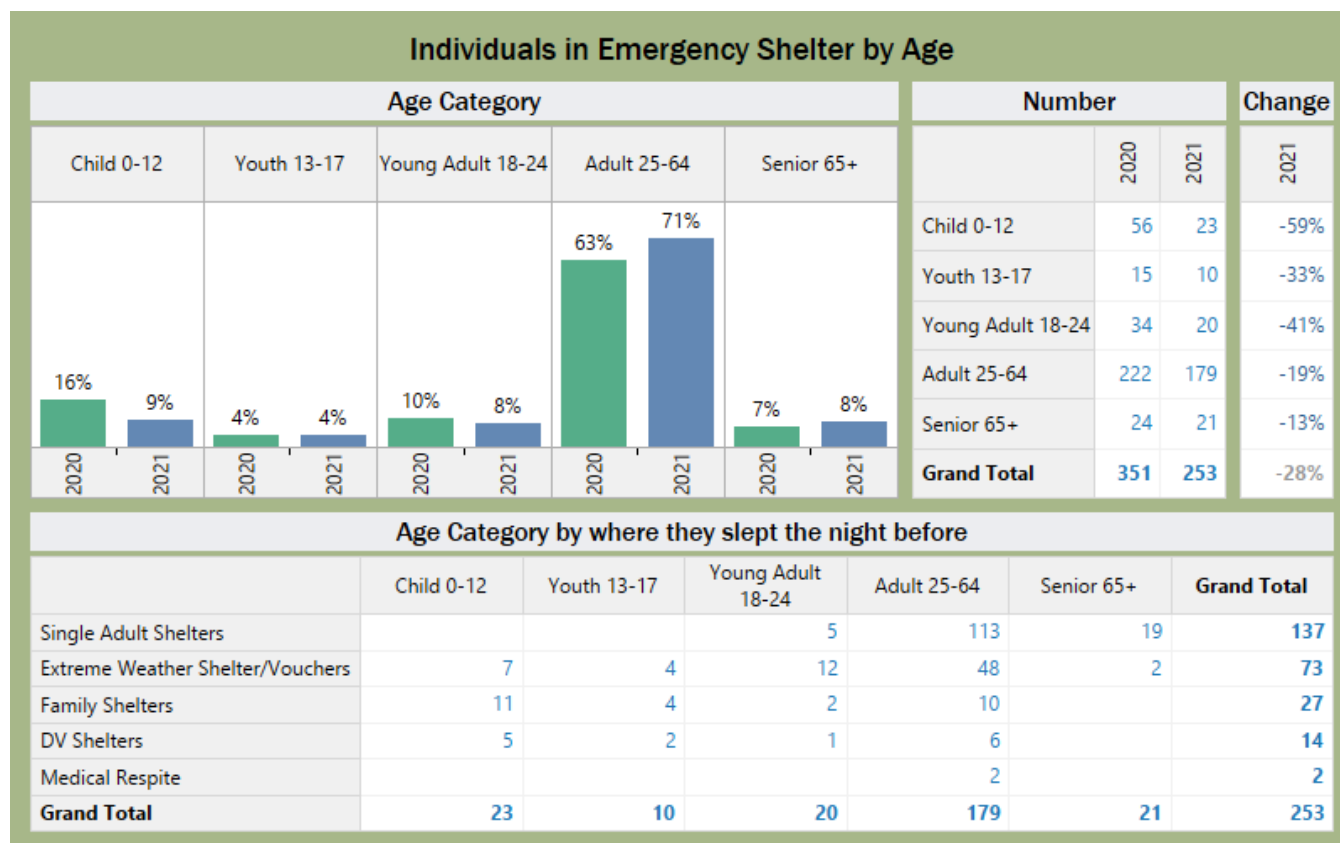


¹ For the list of identified disabilities – see the Disability section below

The most used shelters were those for single adults, which accounted for 54% of the population in shelter. The number of people staying in domestic violence shelter dropped by 64%.

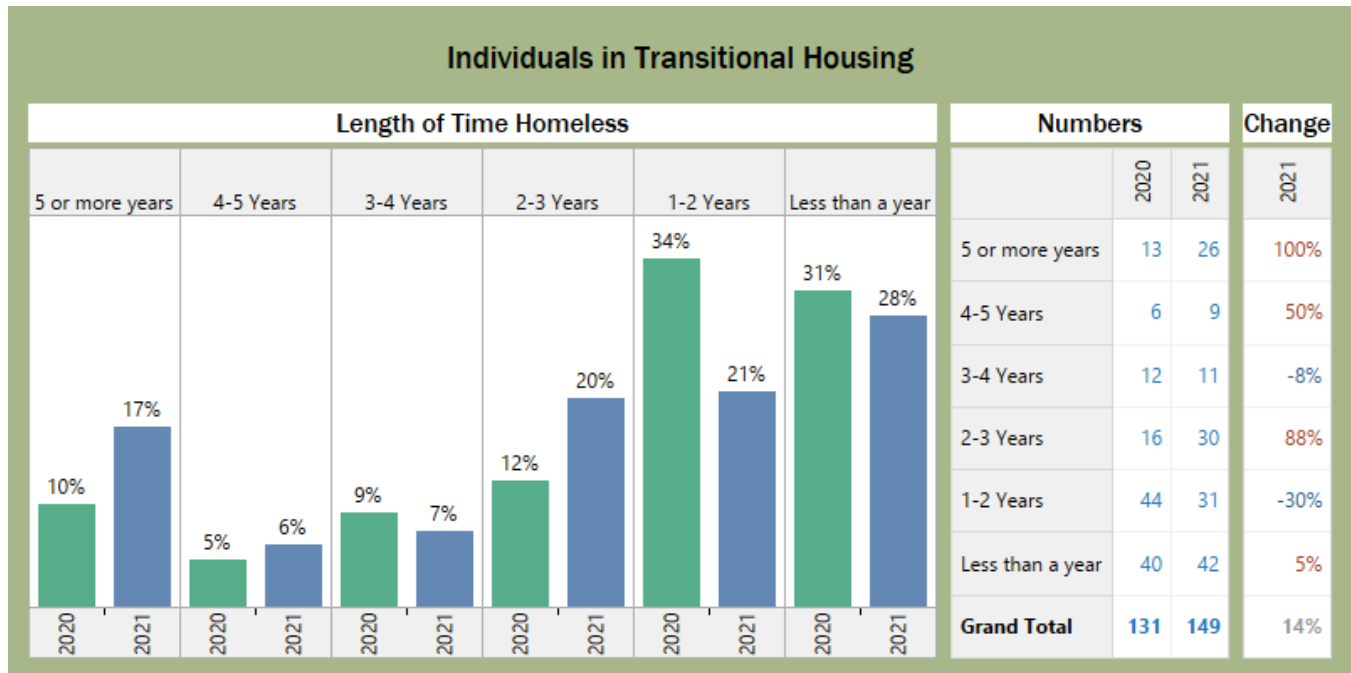


In 2021, 20% of those residing in Emergency Shelters were youth or young adults under 24 compared to 30% in 2020. The number of adults and seniors in emergency decreased from the previous year by 19%.

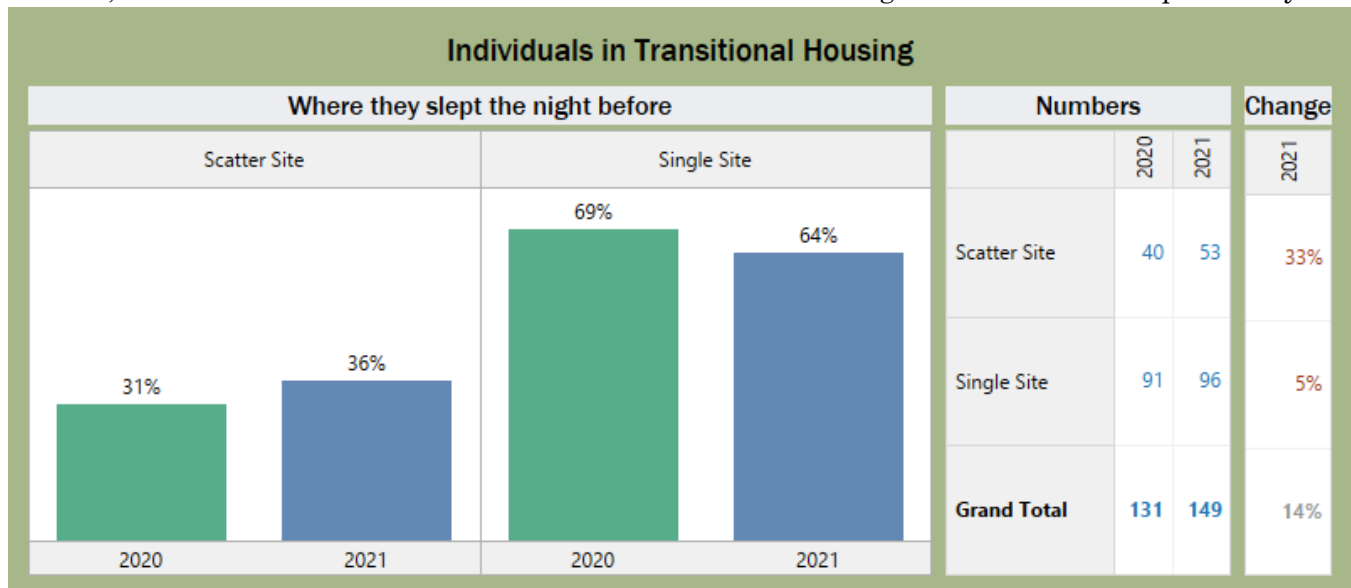


Transitional Housing

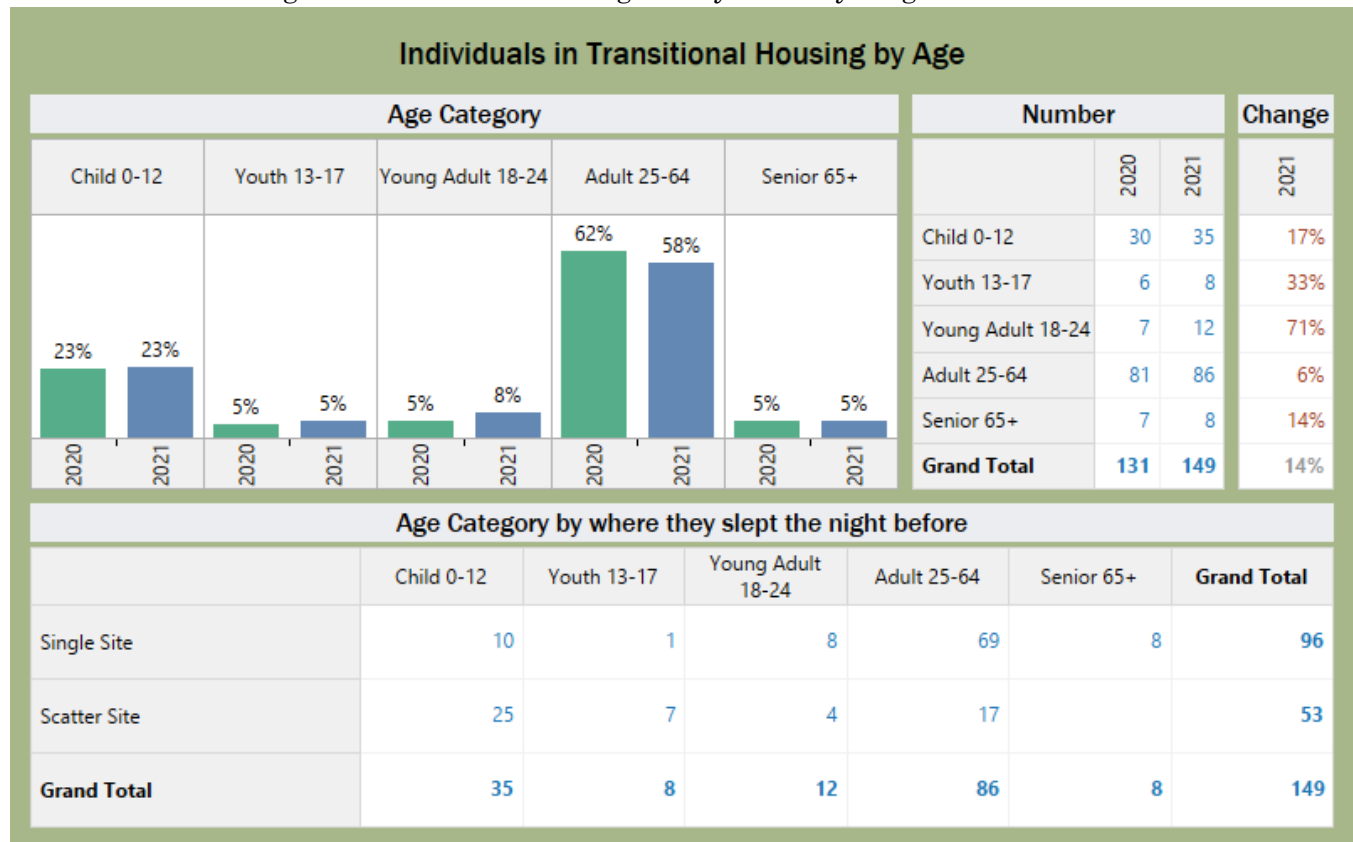
Transitional Housing provides more amenities than emergency shelter and is designed as a transition between emergency shelter and permanent housing. Transitional housing usually has a set time limit for residency, and mandatory program steps intended to prepare a resident for housing and self-sufficiency. In Yakima County, 149 individuals were staying in Transitional Housing the night before, compared to 131 in 2020: an increase of 14%. Almost a third of them became homeless less than year ago.



While the ratio of individuals in Single Site Transitional Housing compared to Scatter Site decreased in 2021, the actual number of individuals in Transitional Housing increased from the previous year.

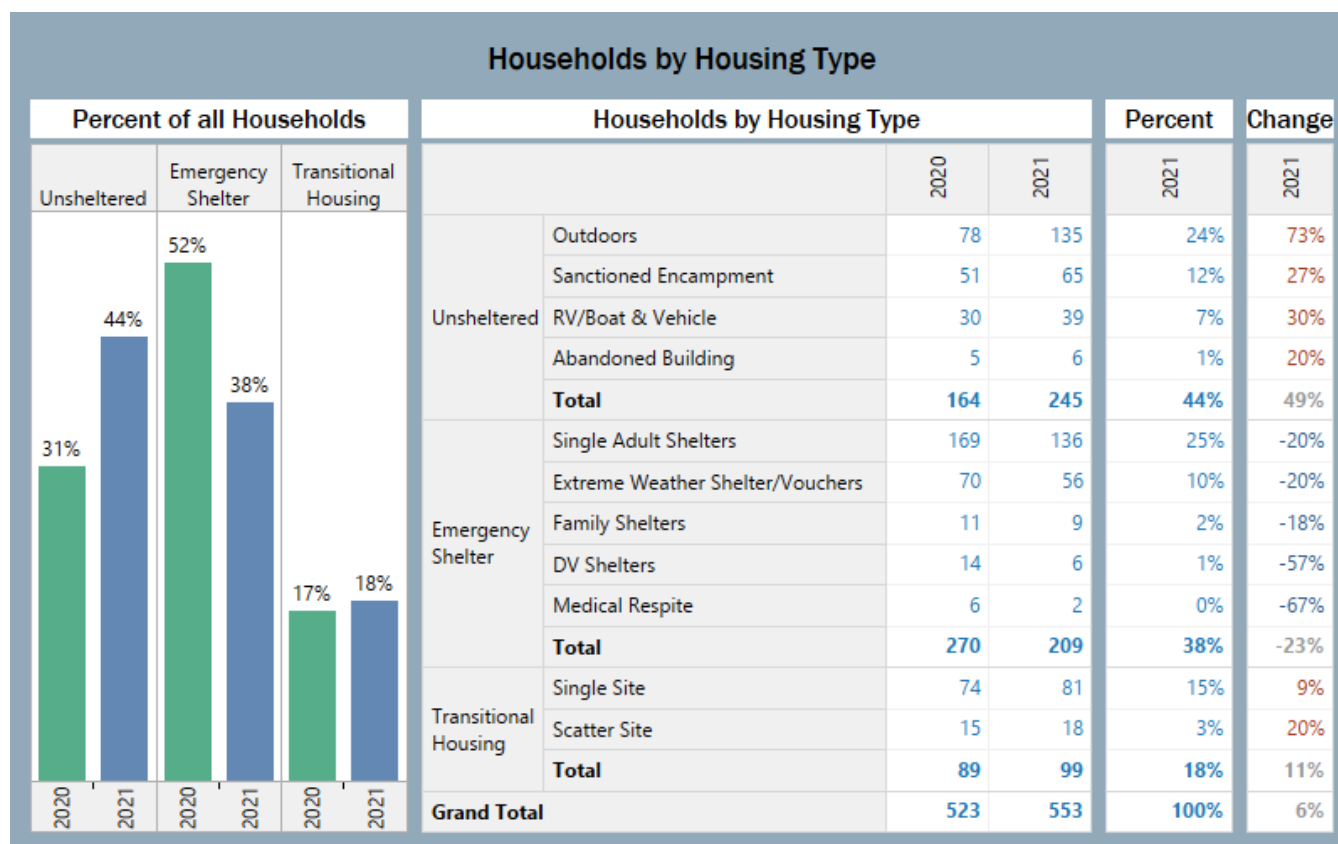


37% of those residing in Transitional Housing were youth or young adults under 24.

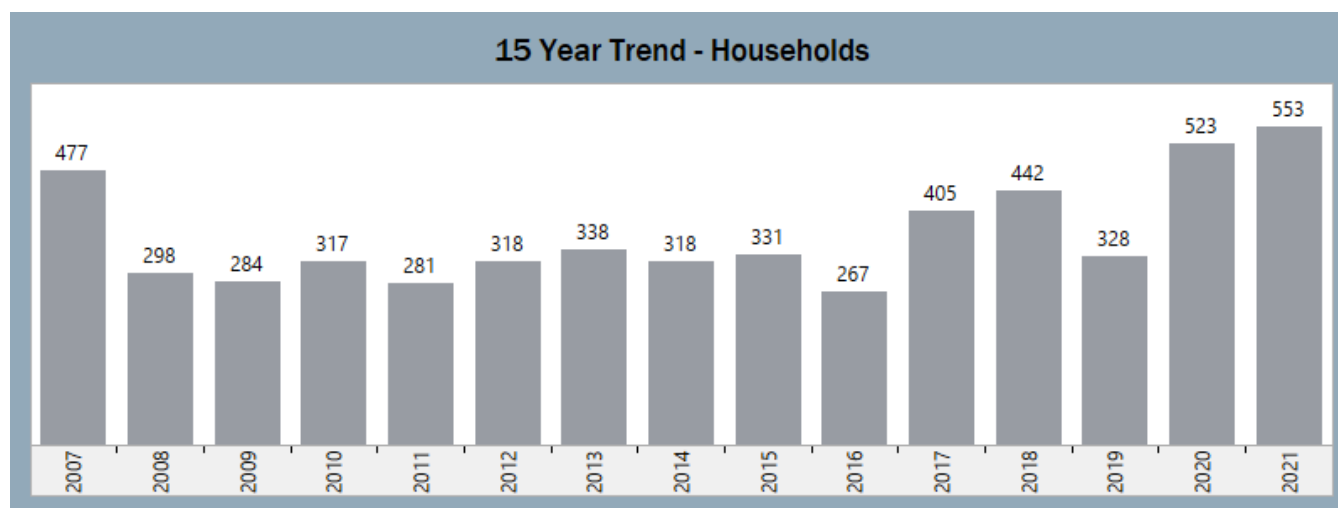


Homeless Households

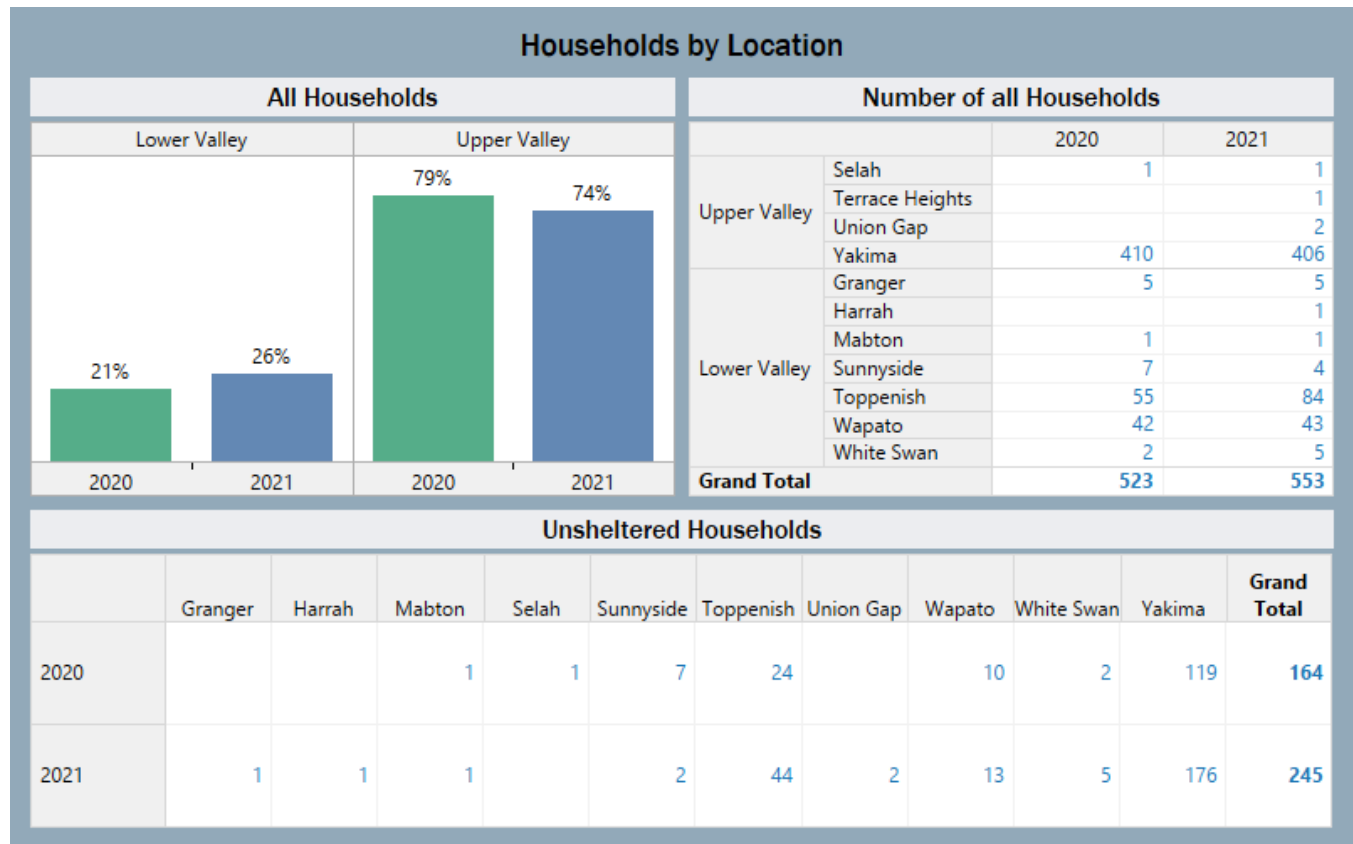
Viewing data by households can provide a more consistent view of homelessness in the community. In 2021, 553 households were experiencing homelessness an increase of 6%. More than 2 in 5 households, or 44% counted were unsheltered. The largest increase was in households sleeping outdoors in unsanctioned encampments, which increased 73% from 2020.



The following chart shows the overall count of households experiencing homelessness since 2007.



While 74% of all Households stayed in the Upper Valley the night before the count, this is primarily due to the placement of temporary housing such as Emergency Shelters and Transitional Housing. Looking at households that are unsheltered, 72% percent stayed in the City of Yakima.



Household Type

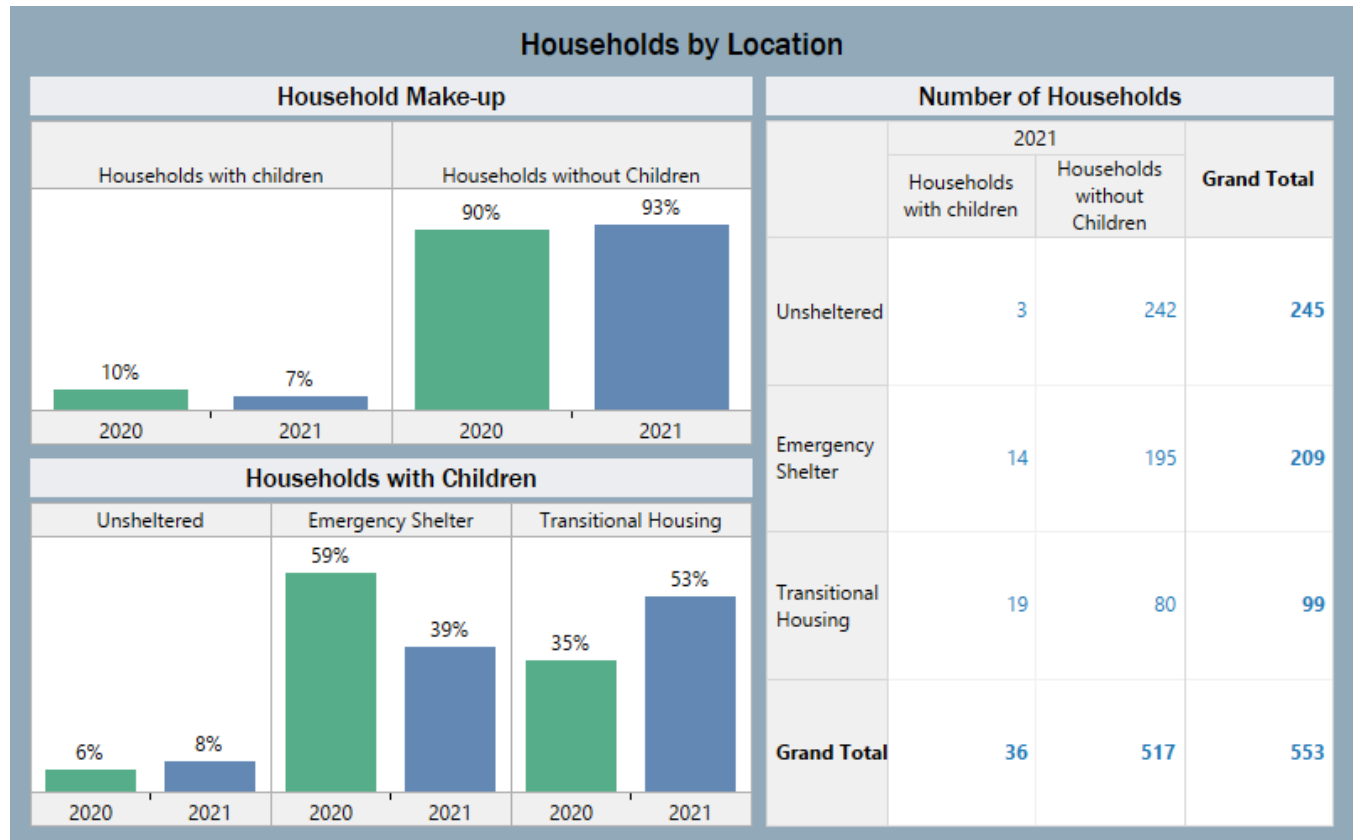
Households are composed of three categories:

- Households without children
- Households with at least one adult and one child
- Households with only children²

It is notoriously difficult to encourage unaccompanied minors from participating in the PIT Survey due to a variety of factors, including mistrust of authorities and the fact that many could be runaways or rejected by their household. They are also not included in a Shelter Count as there is not currently a program to house minors in the community.

² Also referred to as unaccompanied minors

In 2021, there was a 30% reduction in households with children experiencing homelessness. 36 households had children compared to 51 in 2020. 92% of those households were sheltered in either Emergency Shelter or Transitional Housing. Households with children represented 7% of households in Emergency Shelter.



Household by Location - Detail

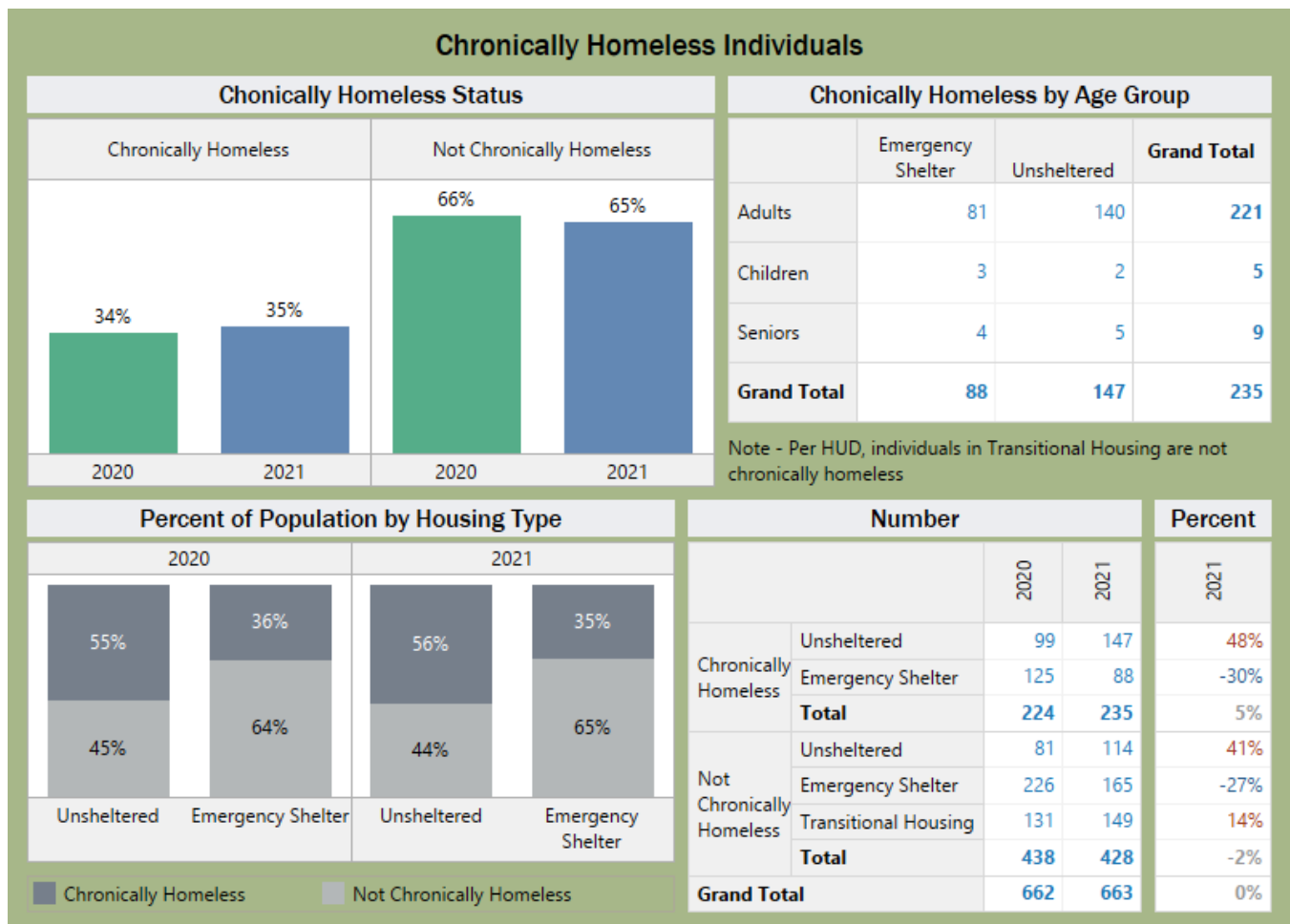
		Number of Households			
		2020		2021	
		Households with children	Households without Children	Households with children	Households without Children
Unsheltered	Abandoned Building	1	4		6
	Outdoors		78		135
	RV/Boat & Vehicle	1	29	2	37
	Sanctioned Encampment	1	50	1	64
Emergency Shelter	DV Shelters	11	3	3	3
	Extreme Weather Shelter/Vouchers	10	60	6	50
	Family Shelters	9	2	5	4
	Medical Respite		6		2
	Single Adult Shelters		169		136
Transitional Housing	Scatter Site	12	3	13	5
	Single Site	6	68	6	75
Grand Total		51	472	36	517

Special Populations

This section reviews the survey results by Chronically Homeless status, disability, age, and Veteran status.

Chronically Homeless

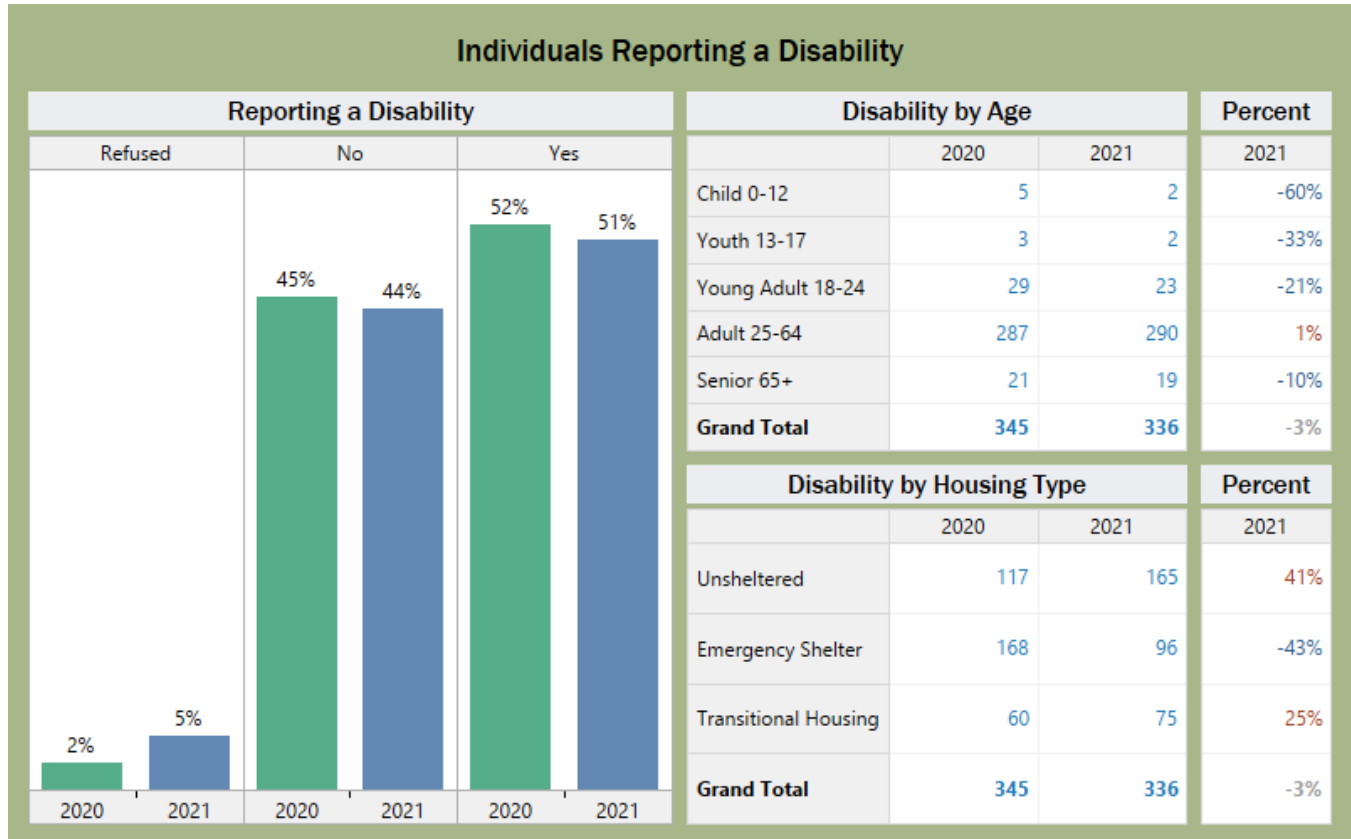
Chronically homeless is defined as an individual with a disability who lives either in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter. The individual could also be living in an institutional care facility, if the individual has been living in the facility for fewer than 90 days and had been living in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter immediately prior to entering the institutional care facility³. In 2021, 235 individuals were identified as being chronically homeless – a 5% increase from 2020. While the number of chronically homeless individuals in Emergency Shelter decreased in 2021, the number of chronically homeless individuals who were unsheltered increased by 48% from the previous year.



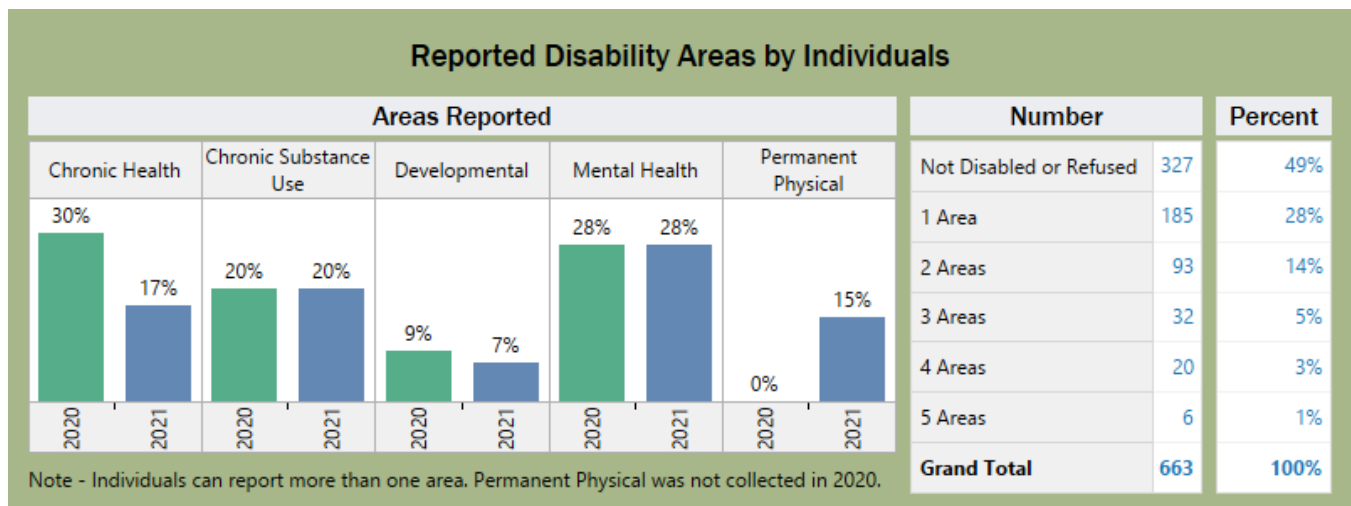
³ Source: Department of Housing and Urban Development, 24 CFR Parts 91 and 578; RIN 2506-AC37 Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing: Defining “Chronically Homeless”. See a flowchart of this process at <https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/Flowchart-of-HUDs-Definition-of-Chronic-Homelessness.pdf>

Disability

The following section reviews reported disabilities; in 2021, 336 individuals reported a disability which included 65% of individuals unsheltered and 48% of those in Emergency Shelter. The number of individuals reporting a disability has decreased by 3% from 2020.

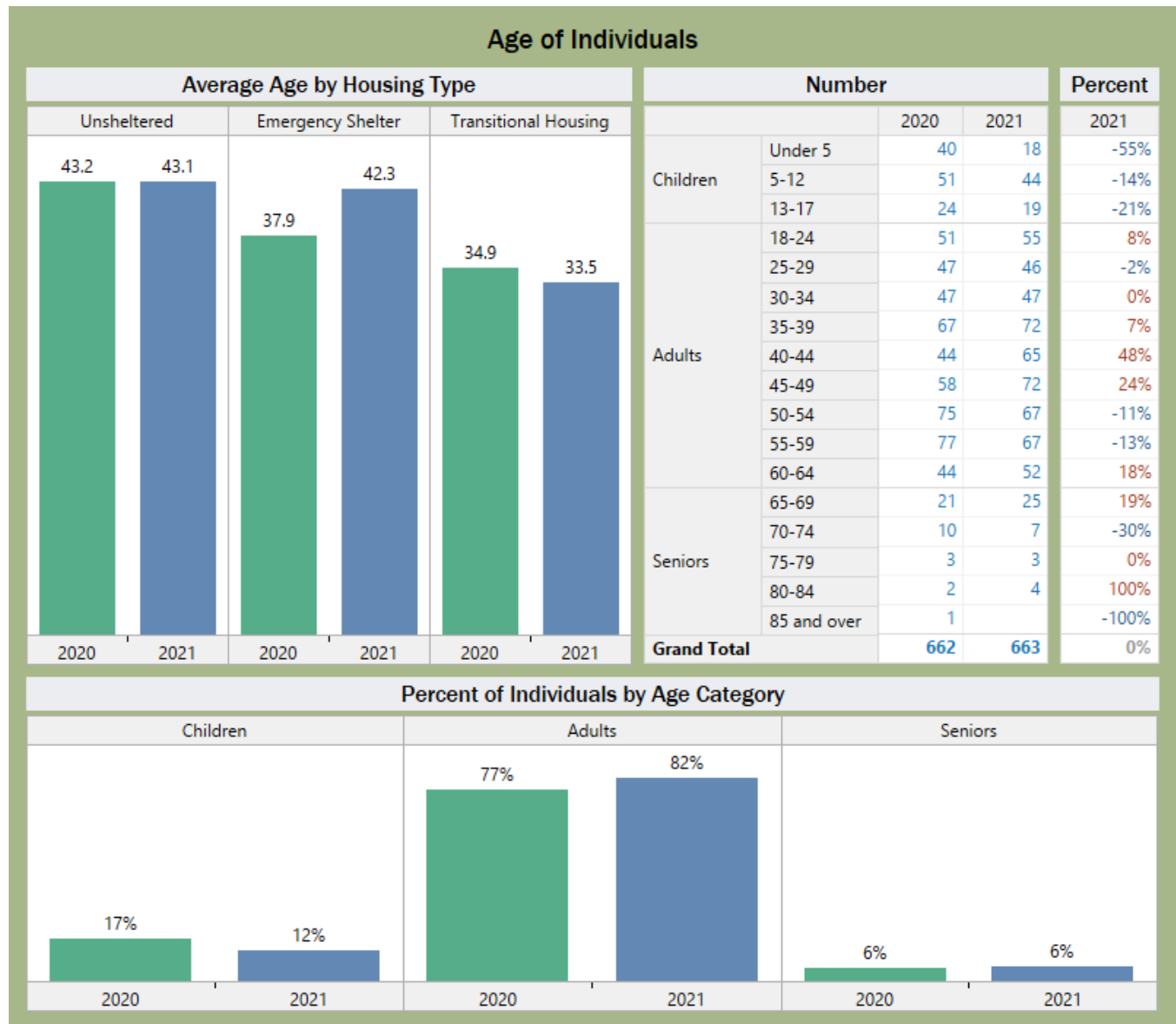


In 2021, there was a 55% decrease in the number of individuals who reported Chronic Health as a disability. Note – Permanent Physical was not an option in 2020.



Age

The average age of all individuals counted was 40.7 years old, which was an increase from 2020's average age: 38.7 years old. While 82% of individuals were Adults over 18 and under 65, 1 in 5, or 136 individuals, were under the age of 25. In 2020 the number under the age of 25 was 1 in 4, showing a significant decrease in the number of children under the age of 18 experiencing homelessness.



It can be a challenge to survey unaccompanied minors. All the children under the age of 18 identified above are residing with their household.

Veterans

In 2021, 40 individuals surveyed were Veterans; a 17% drop in the number of Veterans surveyed the prior year. Of the 40 Veterans surveyed, 30% of them were unsheltered and sleeping outdoors. Almost two-thirds of all Veterans were chronically homeless, with 83% reporting a disability.

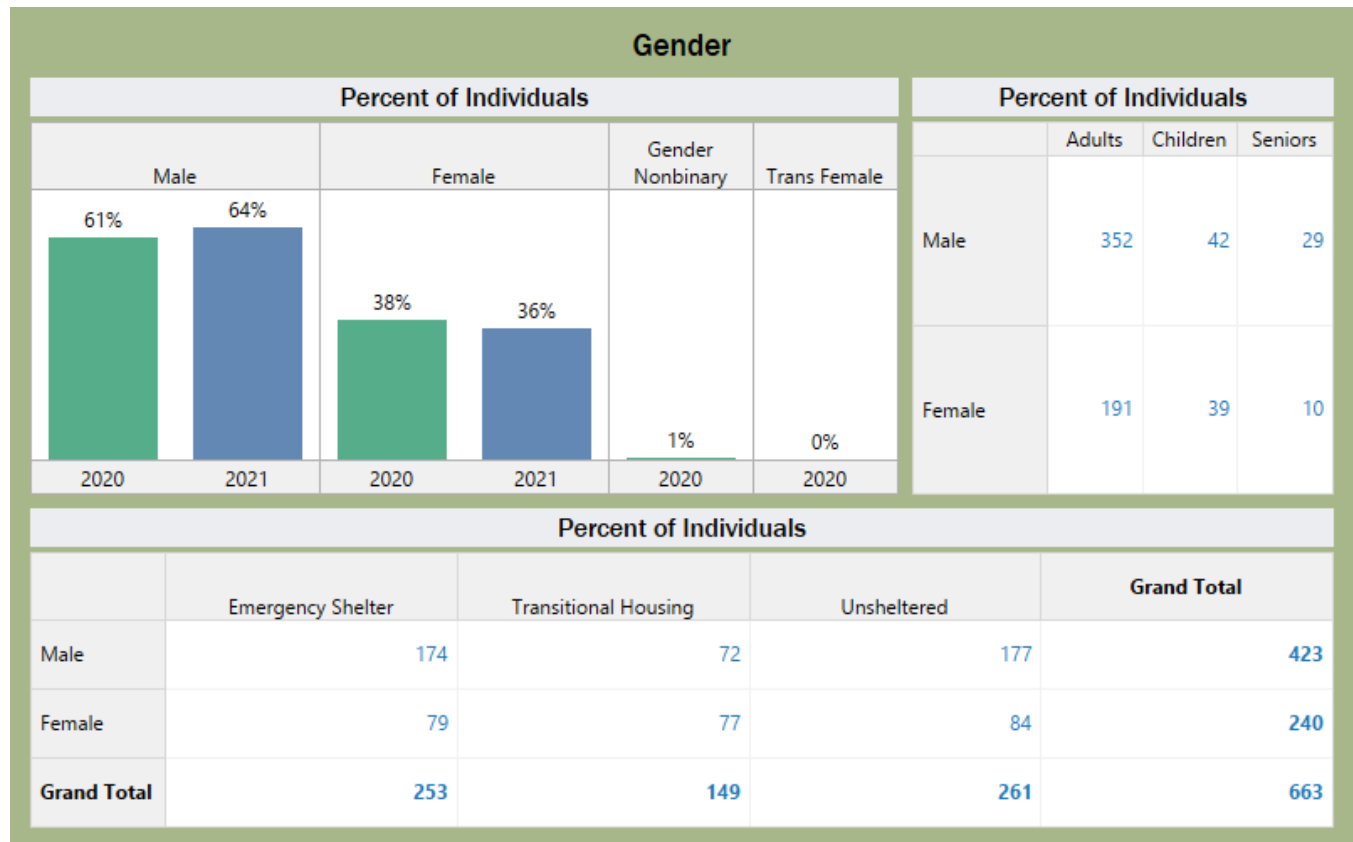


Demographics

This section outlines the various demographics of individuals who were surveyed.

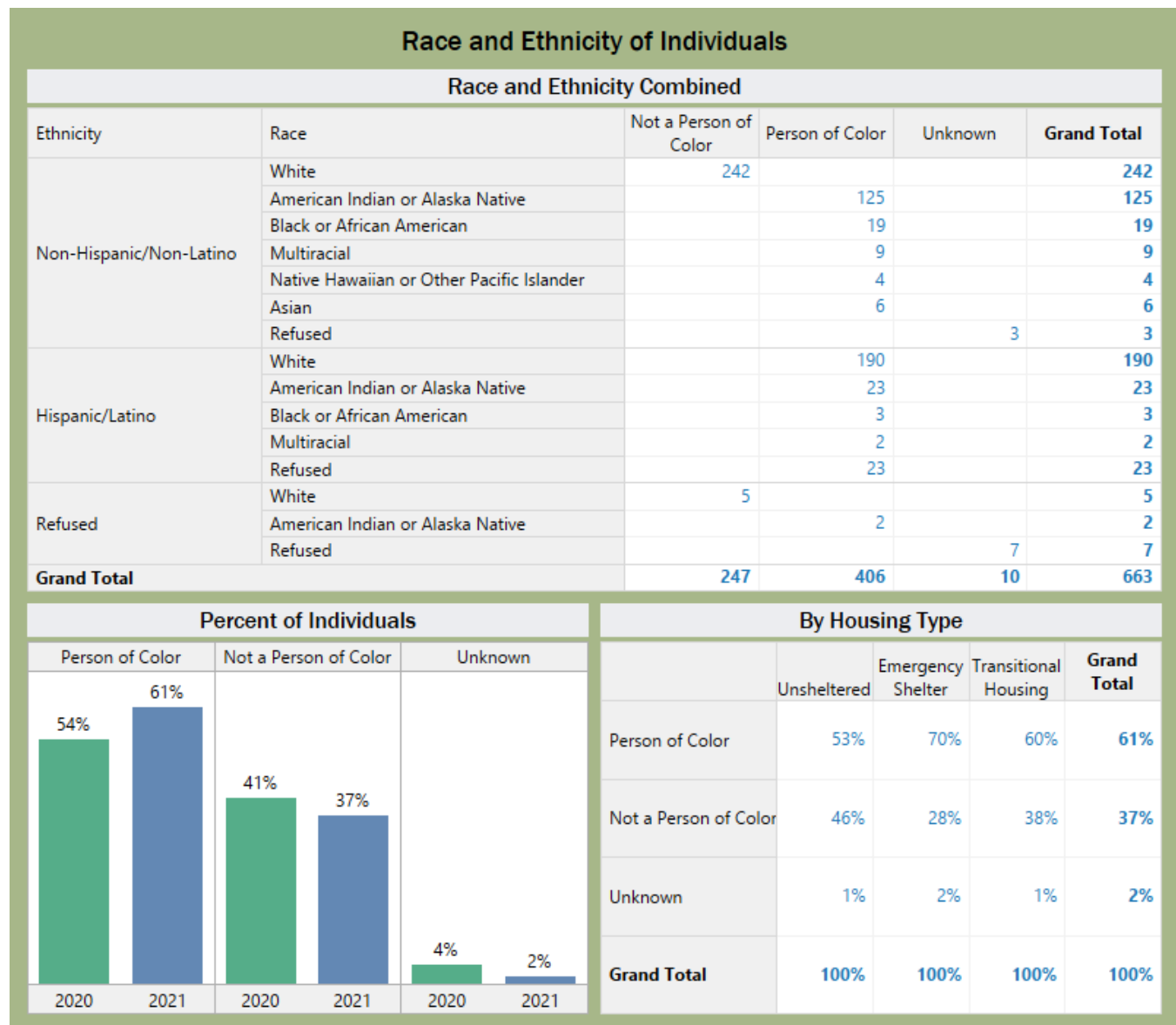
Gender

In 2021, almost two-thirds of individuals were male and were the largest gender group across all age groups and shelter types⁴.



⁴ Per the LGBT Foundation, Gender Non-binary is defined as identifying as either having a gender which is in-between or beyond the two categories 'man' and 'woman, as fluctuating between 'man' and woman', or as having no gender, either permanently or some of the time.

Persons of Color



Tribal Enrollment

In 2021, 118 individuals surveyed were enrolled in a Federally Recognized Tribe; 10 were not enrolled, but their parents were enrolled. 80% of those who were enrolled or whose parents were enrolled, were members of the Confederated Tribes of Yakama Nation.

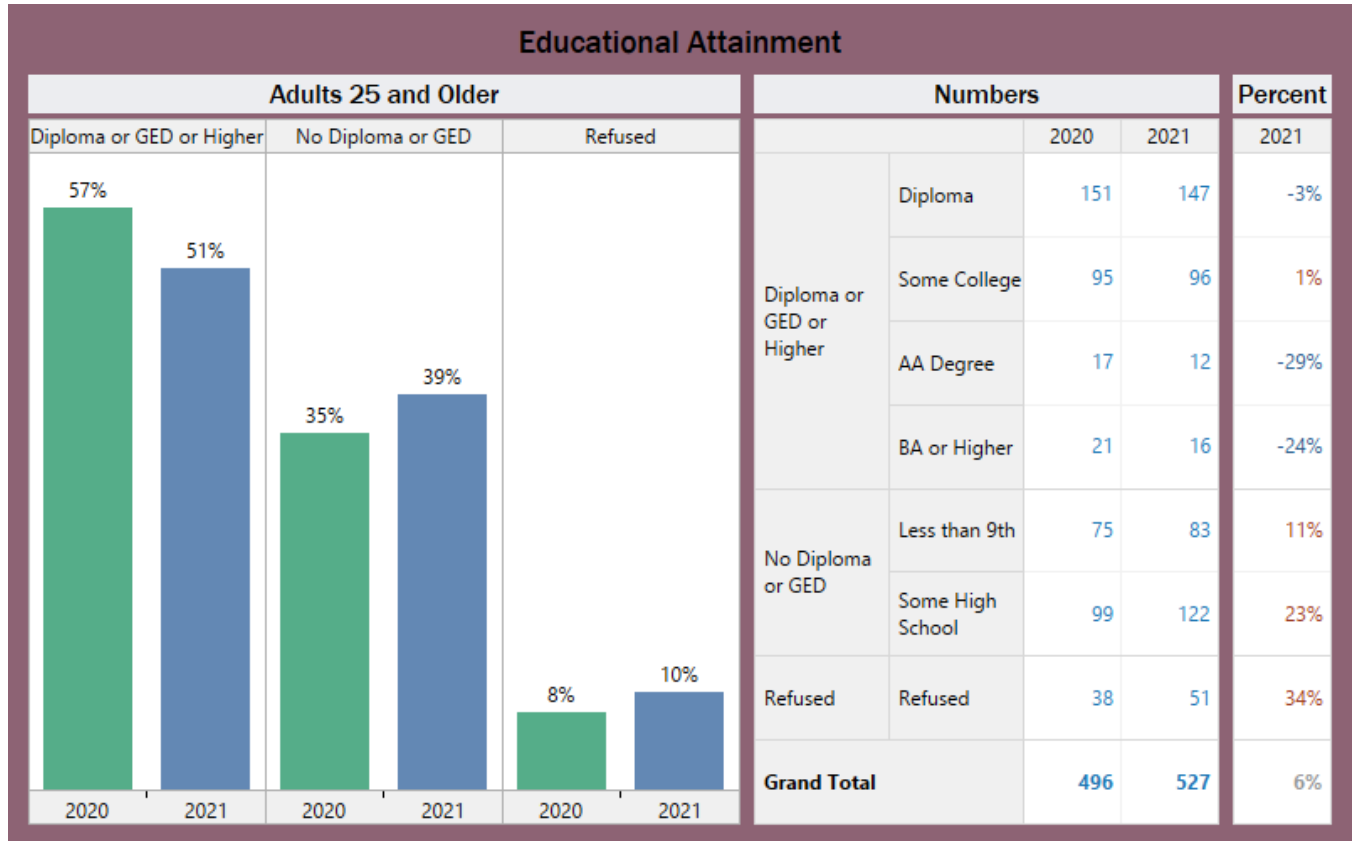
Individuals enrolled in the Confederated Tribes of Yakama Nation represented 15% of all individuals surveyed.

Tribal Enrollment		
	2020	2021
N/A	525	535
Yakama Nation	101	102
Blackfeet Nation	3	5
Warm Springs	3	3
Refused & Unknown	12	2
Cherokee	1	2
Witchinacaw		1
Umatilla		1
Siksika Nation		1
Shoshone-Bannock Tribes		1
Rapio Wenatchee		1
Pima		1
Ojibway		1
Northern Arapaho		1
Muckleshoot		1
Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe	1	1
Colville	3	1
Cheyenne Arapaho		1
Cheanban		1
Aleut		1
Tlingit	1	
Sioux	1	
Rosebud Sioux Tribe	1	
Nisqually	1	
Lummi Nation	1	
Grossmont	2	
Colorado River Indian Tribes	1	
Choctaw	3	
Chippewa	2	
Grand Total	662	663

Education Level

The following table shows the educational attainment for adults 25 and older for those surveyed. This delineation was done to prevent a false reading for children in the appropriate grade level.

In 2021, 527 individuals were 25 and older. 51% of adults 25 and older surveyed had an educational attainment level of a diploma/GED or higher.

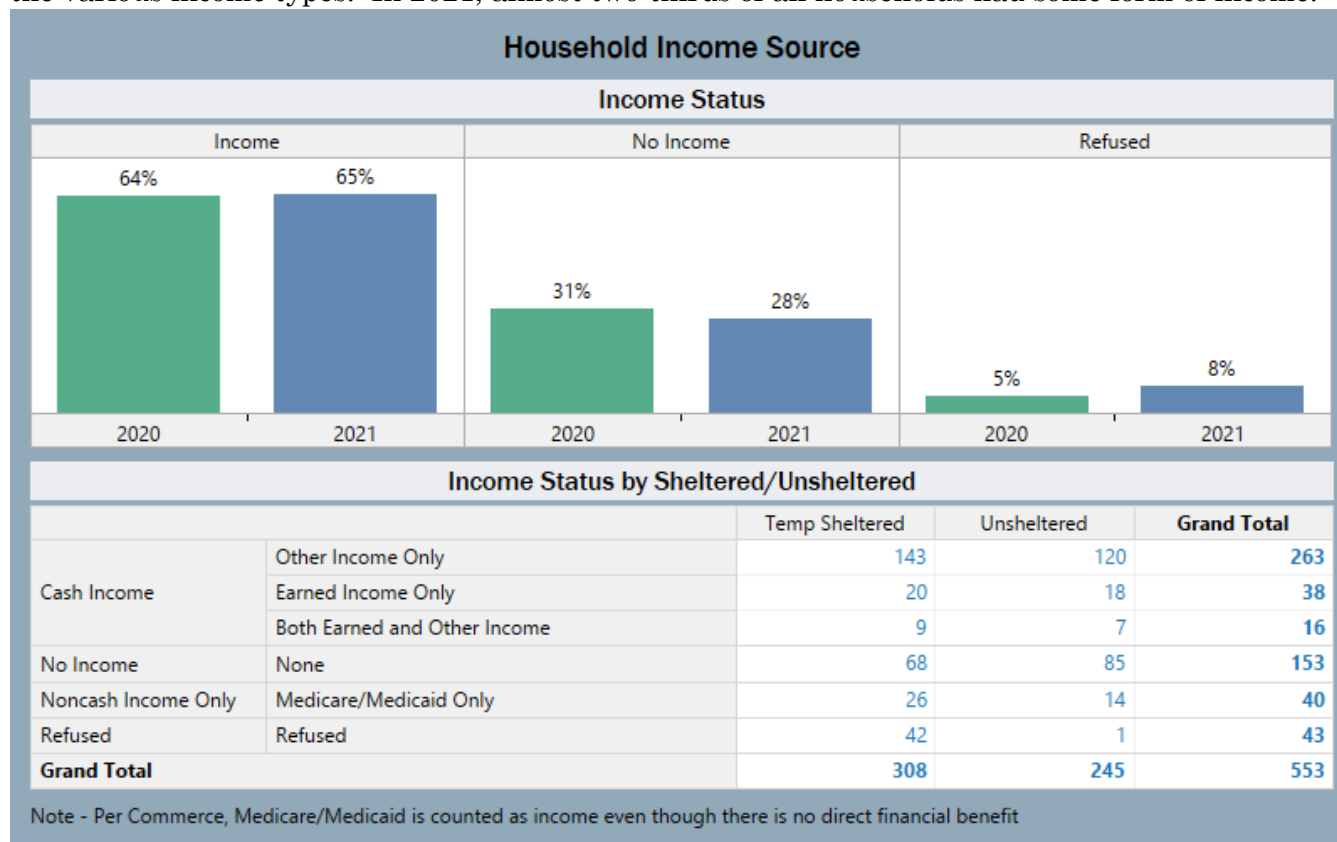


Income Source

Multiple categories were included when asking about income:

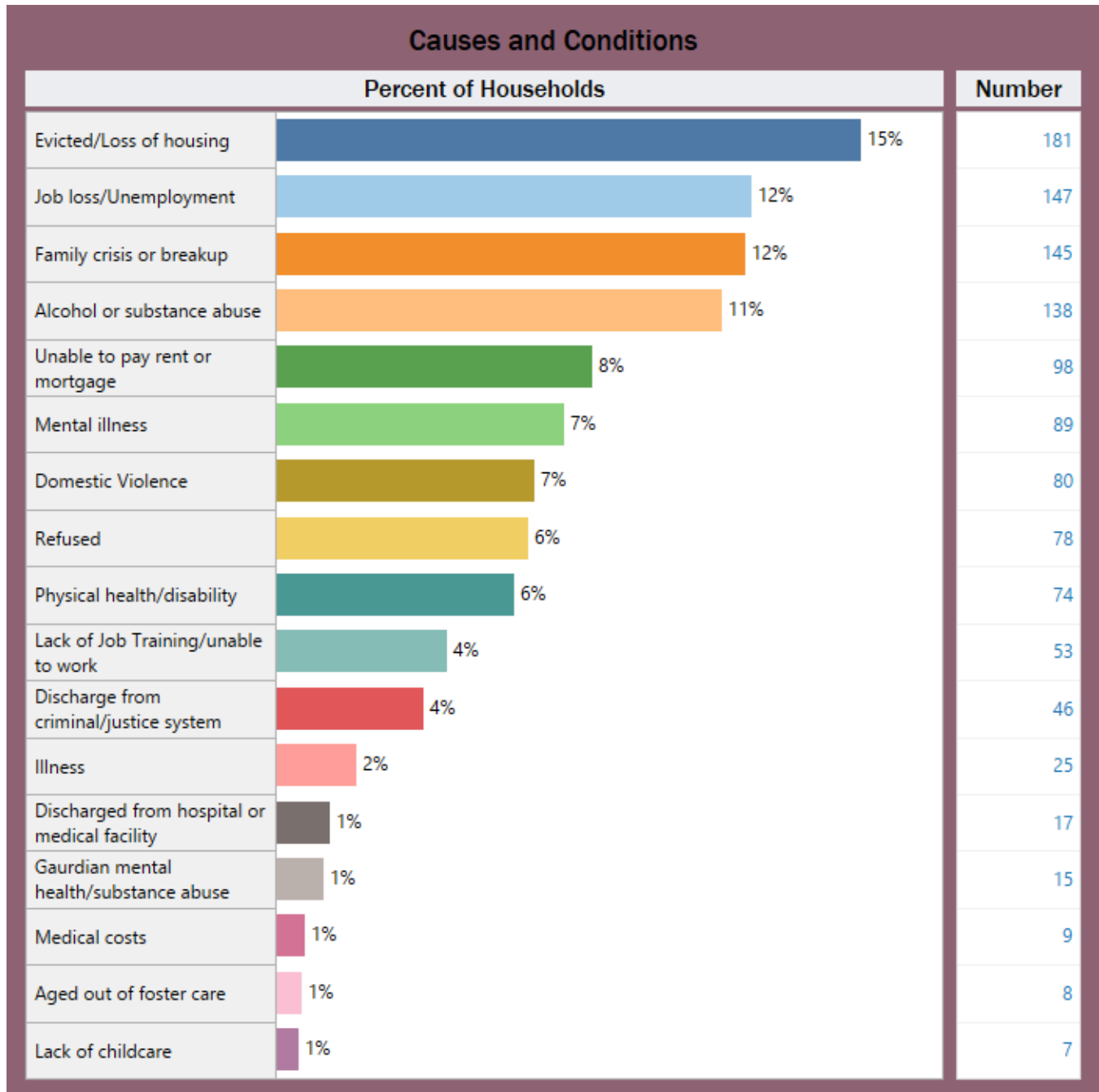
Status	Income Type	Income Category	Detail
Income	Cash Income	Earned Income	Full-time Work
			Part-time Work
			Under the Table
			Farm/Seasonal Work
		Other Income	Panhandling
			TANF
			Relatives, partners, friends
			SSI/SSDI
			Per Capita
			Temp Disability/ABD
			Unemployment Income
No Income	Non-Cash Income	Medicare/Medicaid	Medicare/Medicaid
	None	None	None
	Refused	Refused	Refused

Note – these categories shifted slightly to match changes in HMIS so no trend data is available for the various income types. In 2021, almost two-thirds of all households had some form of income.



Causes and Conditions

Individuals surveyed were asked about what contributed most to their homelessness. They were able to select more than one options; the following list is not weighted but rather shows the number of individuals who listed that condition as a contributing factor. When asked about causes and conditions, 94%, or 475 households, responded; with 78 households refusing.



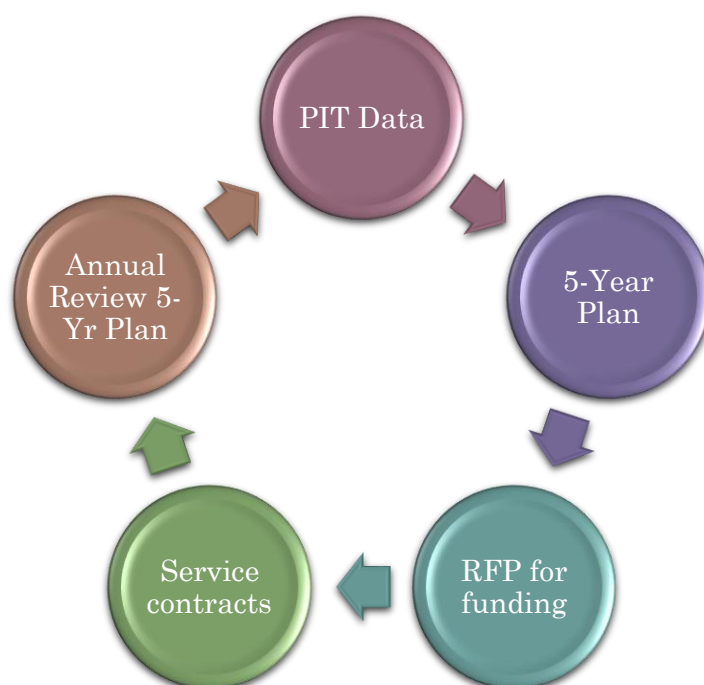
Appendix

Methodology

This section outlines the various assumptions made while developing the report.

How It All Fits

The data collected during PIT drives Yakima County's local 5-Year Plan to end homelessness⁵ by measuring outcomes and future areas of focus. The data is also collated with data from other communities across the country and reported in the Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR). The AHAR is a HUD report to the U.S. Congress that provides nationwide estimates of homelessness, including information about the demographic characteristics of homeless persons, service use patterns, and the capacity to house homeless persons. This helps state and federal funders determine the future allocation of housing and homeless dollars to our community.



Developing Survey Questions

The 2020 HUD data standards were used when designing the survey because the Washington State Department of Commerce measures Yakima County's performance using the 2020 HUD data standards. Additional responses were added to the questions regarding an individual's income sources and circumstances contributing to homelessness.

⁵ Located at <https://yakimacounty.us/DocumentCenter/View/23705/Yakima-County-5-Year-Plan-to-Address-Homelessness-2019-2024?bidId=>

Definitions

This section defines common terms utilized in the report.

Emergency Shelter

There are many types of Emergency Shelter including:

- A clean, warm place to get out of the rain or weather. There are no mats and sometimes no blankets. Toilets provided, but no food. No storage facilities.
- A mat on the floor with blankets. Warm, clean, dry, with toilet facilities. Snacks may be provided. Meals and/or storage facilities are seldom provided.
- Beds, storage, and meals available in addition to showers and a place to do laundry

Emergency shelters may be staffed, volunteer-run, self-managed, or mixed-model. Different types of shelter are appropriate for different people.

Emergency Shelter -Extreme Winter Weather Shelter (EWWS)

This is a shelter that is open during the winter months, and accepts anyone – drunk or sober, referred or knocking at the door. This shelter is open only on nights when the weather is dangerous to the survival of people sleeping outdoors.

Emergency Shelter -Domestic Violence Shelter

This is a place established to provide temporary food and shelter, counseling, and related services to victims of violent situations, such as sexual assault, stalking, and domestic violence.

Emergency Shelter - Medical Respite

This provides beds for people who need bed rest but are not sick or injured enough to be in the hospital. Most have a time limit because there is more need than there is shelter.

Encampment

The term encampment has connotations of both impermanence and continuity. People are staying in temporary structures or enclosed places that are not intended for long-term continuous occupancy on an ongoing basis. Inhabitants may be a core group of people who are known to one another and who move together to different locations when necessary, or they may be a changing group of people who cycle in and out of a single location. The physical structures that make up encampments can take many forms, including tents on pallets and shanties, or lean-to shacks built with scavenged materials. Structures may be simple or complex multiroom compounds. People experiencing homelessness in encampments may also stay in groups of cars or vans or in manmade tunnels and naturally occurring caves⁶.

Encampment -Sanctioned

The above that meets one or more of the following:

- Encampments permitted by law or ordinance on public and or privately owned property, usually only in designated locations
- May have established rules that govern the size, location, or duration of encampments
- May have a public agency or nonprofit organization manage encampments

⁶ Source: HUD Publication: Understanding Encampments

- Infrastructure and public services—which may include laundry and potable water, common spaces for eating and meeting, lockers for storing belongings (including on a longer-term basis), meal services and food donations, job training programs, access to mail and voice mail services—provided by the municipality and private or faith-based organizations and volunteers
- May provide case management, including assistance applying for transitional or permanent housing and other benefits, appealing denials, and managing funds

Encampment - Unsanctioned

Encampments not permitted by law or ordinance on public and or privately owned property.

Race and Ethnicity

In the data sources used in this section six race groups are used: White, Black or African American, American Indian and Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, and Some Other Race. The US Census *Bureau race* categories reflect a social definition of race recognized in this country. In accordance with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) definition of ethnicity, the Census Bureau provides data for the basic categories in the OMB standards: Hispanic or Latino and Not Hispanic or Latino.

In general, the Census Bureau defines ethnicity or origin as the heritage, nationality group, lineage, or country of birth of the person or the person’s parents or ancestors before their arrival in the United States. People who identify their origin as Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino may be of any race.

Hispanic origin is a separate concept from race. However, this did not preclude individuals from self-identifying their race as “Latino,” “Mexican,” “Puerto Rican,” “Salvadoran,” or other national origins or ethnicities; in fact, many did so. If the response provided to the race question could not be classified in one or more of the five OMB race groups, it was generally classified in the category Some Other Race. In the 2010 Census, over half of the Hispanic population identified as White and no other race, while about one-third provided responses that were classified as Some Other Race alone when responding to the question on race⁷.

Transitional Housing

Transitional Housing provides more amenities than emergency shelter and is designed as a transition between emergency shelter and permanent housing. Amenities usually include a room of your own, a common kitchen, and laundry facilities. Transitional housing usually has a set time limit for residency and program steps that must be completed, intended to prepare a resident for housing and self-sufficiency.

⁷ 15 US Census, Questions and Answers for Census 2000 Data on Race

Current Inventory

This section outlines the current inventory of those counted in the Shelter portion of the survey.

Sanctioned Encampments

In Yakima County, the only sanctioned encampment is Camp Hope, operated by Grace City Outreach. Although it is classified as unsheltered it meets all the criteria from the above definition of a sanctioned encampment

Emergency Shelter

The following chart lists the various emergency shelters in Yakima County

Grouping	Agency	Program Name
Single Adult Shelter	Generating Hope	Noah's Ark
	Rod's House	Sunnyside Shelter
	Yakima Union Gospel Mission	Men's Shelter
		Women's Shelter
EWWS Shelter/Vouchers	Northwest Community Action Center	Extreme Weather Hotel/Motel Vouchers
	Rod's House	Young Adult Extreme Weather Shelter
	Grace City Outreach	Toppenish Extreme Weather Shelter
	Yakima Neighborhood Health Services	Extreme Weather Hotel/Motel Vouchers
		Cosecha Court
DV Shelter	Lighthouse ⁸	Domestic Violence Shelter
	YWCA	Domestic Violence Shelter
Family Shelter	Triumph Treatment Services	Family Shelter
	Union Gospel Mission	Family Shelter
Medical Respite	Yakima Neighborhood Health Services	Imperial Respite Care
		Bonlender House

Transitional Housing

The following chart lists the various Transitional Housing programs in Yakima County⁹:

Grouping	Agency	Program Name
Single Site	Yakima Union Gospel Mission	Bridge Program
		New Life
		New Life - Family
		Discovery
	Yakama Nation	Village of Hope
	Yakima Neighborhood Health Services	RDH Resource Center
Scatter Site	YWCA	DV Transitional Housing

⁸ Formally Lower Valley Crisis and Support Services

⁹ Note: In 2021, the Vet House, managed by Comprehensive Healthcare, converted to Permanent Supportive Housing.