

Vancouver Homeless Count 2019



Prepared for the City of Vancouver by:
the Homelessness Services Association of BC
the BC Non-Profit Housing Association and
Urban Matters CCC



Cover photo: "The Healing Quilt: Blanketing Our Lost Loved Ones" mural in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. The mural was designed by Vancouver-based Cree artist Jerry Whitehead from the Peter Chapman First Nation, Vancouver-based Anishinaabe artist Sharifah Marsden from the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation, and Corey Larocque. The memorial mural features a thunderbird and star blanket, with West Coast and East Coast design to honour the victims of the ongoing opioid crisis. The mural depicts the words of Downtown Eastside activist and poet Bud Osborn (1947-2014) "There's no one to care if you do not care."

Photo credit: Hajer Awatta.

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Vancouver Homeless Count 2019 Partners



LU'MA NATIVE HOUSING SOCIETY



The Aboriginal Homelessness Steering Committee (AHSC) was also an integral partner in the Count

Acknowledgements

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We express our gratitude to all the people currently experiencing homelessness who took the time to fill out the surveys and talk to volunteers. The information they provided make up the components of this report.

Volunteers make homeless counts possible, and 2019 was no different. The 2019 Homeless Count would not have been possible without the 500 volunteers who gave of their time, both as volunteer interviewers and in supporting all aspects of the project.¹ We would also like to thank the staff of emergency shelters, detox facilities, safe houses and transition houses and the many agencies across Vancouver that participated in this year's count.

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¹ 506 volunteers attended the count training

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1 | Key Findings

Total Number of Individuals Experiencing Homelessness

- A total of 2,223 individuals were identified as experiencing homelessness in Vancouver in 2019. The majority were sheltered (72%) and 28% were unsheltered. While the total number of individuals experiencing homelessness is the highest it has been since counts began in 2005, the growth has slowed over the last two years (2% between 2018 and 2019).

Continued Overrepresentation of Individuals Experiencing Homelessness Who Identify as Indigenous

- A total of 495 survey respondents identified as Indigenous, representing 39% of all respondents. Based on the 2016 Census, Indigenous people accounted for 2.2% of Vancouver's total population. The proportion of survey respondents identifying as Indigenous was higher for unsheltered (46%) than sheltered (34%).

Fewer Women Surveyed for the Count

- Women are more likely to be hidden and therefore underrepresented in homeless counts. Of those surveyed, 76% self-identified as men/male, 23% as women/female and 1% identified as non-binary.

Seniors and Youth Experiencing Homelessness

- Twenty-three percent (23%) of survey respondents were seniors (55+ years of age), an increase from 21% in 2018.
- Seven percent (7%) of survey respondents were Youth and children (under 25 years of age); a decrease from 9% in 2018. There were 43 children who were under the age of 19 and accompanied by a parent or guardian.

Deteriorating Health of Individuals Experiencing Homelessness

- The majority of survey respondents (60%) reported two or more health concerns; an increase from 54% in 2018.
- Unsheltered survey respondents are twice as likely (16% vs 8%) to have health concerns compared to sheltered survey respondents; consistent with previous counts. Forty-four percent (44%) of survey respondents reported a medical condition or illness, 44% reported a mental health issue, and 38% reported a physical disability.
- While addictions continue to be a significant health issue for individuals experiencing homelessness, thirty-one percent (31%) reported no addiction. Of those who reported an addiction, cigarettes were the most reported substance (38%), followed by opioids (33%).

Living in Deep Poverty

- While 33% of survey respondents reported multiple sources of income, they cannot afford rent and continue to live in deep poverty. Welfare and disability benefits are the most commonly reported income sources (42% and 31%). Sixteen percent (16%) of respondents reported employment (full time or part time), while 9% of survey respondents reported no income.

History of Homelessness

- Eighty percent (80%) of survey respondents reported already living in Vancouver when they became homeless. Fifty-six percent (56%) of survey respondents reported being homeless more than one year – an increase from 49% in 2018. Six percent (6%) of respondents indicated being homeless for over ten years.

2 | Introduction

This report presents the findings of the 2019 Vancouver Homeless Count that was commissioned by the City of Vancouver to better understand the characteristics of individuals living in Vancouver and experiencing homelessness, as well as trends since 2005. The findings provide an estimate of individuals experiencing homeless on March 13, 2019. The homeless count is a 'point in time' count that provides a snapshot of people who are experiencing homelessness in a 24-hour period. The Point-in-Time (PiT) counts only represent people that are both approached and consent to be interviewed during a 24-hour period, and is as such recognized as an undercount (by as much as 20%²). Despite this limitation, PiT counts represent a recognized methodology for collecting data on homelessness at a single point in time.

2.1 Context and Background

Homelessness remains a significant and persistent challenge in Vancouver, throughout the Metro Vancouver region and province as a whole. There are many structural, systemic and individual reasons why someone experiences homelessness. In most situations, homelessness is caused by the impact of several different factors over time, rather than a single incident or cause.

The homeless count is an effective instrument that allows governments and service providers to plan programs to address homelessness and to measure the impact of efforts to reduce homelessness. Metro Vancouver (then the Greater Vancouver Regional District) conducted their first homeless count in 2002, called the Research Project on Homelessness in Greater Vancouver. Following the initial count, Metro Vancouver has conducted a count across the region every three years, with the most recent homeless count in Metro Vancouver taking place in 2017.³ Since 2010, the City of Vancouver has conducted its own independent homeless count in the years that a regional count did not take place.

This year, the Vancouver Homeless Count was conducted in collaboration with Lu'ma Native Housing Society, the Aboriginal Homelessness Steering Committee and Infocus Consulting. The Indigenous community partners made contributions to the survey questions, identification of mapping routes, mobilization of volunteers, data collection and analysis, and the creation of the tobacco ties. They also organized a magnet event at Oppenheimer Park in the Downtown Eastside on the day of the count that provided food and entertainment, which helped facilitate respondents' participation in the count.

2 Chris Glynn†, Thomas H. Byrne, and Dennis P. Culhane "Quantifying uncertainty in the American Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) estimates of homelessness" Zillow 2018., http://files.zillowstatic.com/research/public/StaticFiles/Homelessness/Quantifying_Uncertainty_HUD.pdf

3 The Fraser Valley Regional District has also been conducting counts every three years since 2004 which helps provide a fuller picture of homelessness throughout the lower mainland. In 2018, the Province also coordinated the first count in BC to provide a provincial snapshot of homelessness. The report can be found here: http://hsa-bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Final.2018.Report.on_.Homeless.Counts.in_.B.C.V4.pdf

2.2 Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of the count is to provide:

- An updated enumeration of individuals experiencing homelessness in Vancouver;
- A demographic profile of those enumerated on the day of the count; and
- An analysis of trends in homelessness in Vancouver since 2005⁴

2.3 Definition of Homelessness⁵

Consistent with previous years, and counts conducted regionally and provincially, someone is defined as experiencing homelessness for the purpose of this count if they did not have a place of their own where they pay rent and can expect to stay for at least 30 days. This includes people who are:

- without physical shelter – staying on the street, in alleys, doorways, parkades, vehicles, on beaches, in parks and in other public places and/or using homelessness services or staying in hospitals or jails and had no fixed address. or staying at someone else’s place (friend or family) where they did not pay rent (i.e. couch surfing); (defined as “unsheltered”);
- temporarily accommodated in emergency shelters (including Extreme Weather Response (EWR) shelters), detox facilities, safe houses or transition houses for men, youth, women and their children (defined as “sheltered”)

For example, someone who stayed in a garage would be considered homeless if they did not pay rent, even if they considered the garage to be their home. This is similar for someone who is staying in their RV or vehicle and parking on the street. Emergency shelters are not considered housing; thus, shelter clients are included in the homeless count. Someone who stayed at a friend’s place where they did not pay rent (i.e. couch surfer) is also considered as experiencing homelessness as they do not have security of tenure. Individuals paying rent in a Single Room Occupancy (SRO) building may be at risk of homelessness but are not considered as experiencing homelessness for the purpose of the count.

2.4 Methods

The 2019 Vancouver Homeless Count used the Point-in-Time methodology, which is the same methodology used by previous City of Vancouver and Metro Vancouver regional homeless counts to ensure comparability. The count took place over a 24-hour period beginning in the evening of March 12th, 2019 (shelter count) and continued in the day on March 13th, 2019 (unsheltered count). The method used to reach out to each group was tailored for optimal outreach and response rate.

2.4.1 Volunteer and Count Coordination

To conduct the count, the City of Vancouver recruited skilled outreach workers, social service personnel, people with relevant experience, and other motivated individuals. Prior to the count, all volunteers attended training to ensure surveys would be completed as accurately as possible and to prepare interviewers for their shift, both in terms of safety and their ability to approach individuals respectfully.

4 For trend date please see Appendix 1.

5 For further definitions please see Appendix 2.

A Shelter Count Coordinator was responsible for the sheltered portion of the count, while for the unsheltered portion of the count, there were four Area Coordinators, each responsible for one of the four designated areas of the city shown in Figure 1. The Shelter Coordinator and Area Coordinators assigned route locations and shifts, coordinated volunteers for the evening shelter count and the day street count, and were responsible for ensuring that all materials were collected and returned to the consultants in order for data entry and analysis to be completed. Infocus Consulting worked closely with this team to help create volunteer routes and support overall methodological alignment.



Figure 1: Homeless Count Areas

2.4.2 Tobacco Ties⁶

This year marked the second-year tobacco ties were used as icebreakers, instead of cigarettes. Within Indigenous communities, tobacco is used as an offering to the person conducting the ceremony or as an offering to the Creator. It is also used as a form of reciprocity, if you receive something you also give something.⁷ In this case, the tobacco ties were used as a welcome in exchange for a person's time completing the survey.

Leading up to the count, the Indigenous community produced 2,500 tobacco ties for the count in Vancouver. This process involved all Aboriginal Steering Committee organizations, elders and families, and was unifying and empowering for the community. This was a remarkable achievement considering the logistics involved and the short timeline for production.

2.4.3 The Homeless Count Survey

Both a shelter survey and a street survey were used.⁸ Both surveys included screening questions and survey questions to align with previous counts.

Screening Questions

Volunteers began by asking respondents four screening questions designed to ensure individuals consented to be interviewed and to avoid double-counting the same individual. During the shelter count, interviewers first asked screening questions to filter out respondents who had already been interviewed and to ensure they were staying in that shelter for the night. During the street count, interviewers first asked screening questions to filter out respondents who had already been interviewed or who pay rent.

Additions to the Survey Questions

The questions that formed both the sheltered and unsheltered surveys included key questions from previous years, alongside a series of questions that were added and refined since the City's first count in 2010. New, or revised, survey questions this year include:

- A question within the survey to ensure that potential participants explicitly consent to participate in the survey. In previous years people were asked to give verbal consent, but it was not a question on the survey.
- Different parameters to screen participants who are staying at a parent's or guardian's house. If a person can stay as long as they want or it is a temporary situation and they have a house or apartment they can safely

⁶ This section is from the 2018 Metro Vancouver Aboriginal Homeless Count Report, which can be found at <http://infocusconsulting.ca/aboriginal-homelessness-resources/aboriginal-homeless-counts/>

⁷ More information can be found here: <http://traditionalnativehealing.com/tobacco-prayer-ties>

⁸ See Appendix 3 for both survey instruments.

return to, the survey was ended, and they were not enumerated. If the respondent was in a temporary situation where they did not have a house or apartment that they could safely return to, the survey continued, and the participant was enumerated in the count. Previous counts determined enumeration based on whether the respondent was over the age of 25.

- Change in wording and options regarding gender identity. The question was shifted from 'What is your gender?' To 'What is your gender identity?' Wording of answers were changed from 'another gender identity' with an option for respondents to specify, to 'non-binary' with only a checkbox option. This change was made in consultation with experts to align the wording with current best practices regarding gender self-identification.
- Change in approach to asking about people with trans experience. Previously respondents were asked if they 'identify as transgender?' while in 2019 they were asked if they 'identify as someone with trans experience (meaning your gender identity is different than how you were born)?' This is in recognition that a respondent may have trans experience, but no longer identify as transgender.
- Broader categories regarding sexual orientation. Previously respondents were asked if they 'identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, two-spirit, queer or questioning?' In 2019, respondents were asked if they 'identify as straight (heterosexual)?' with answer options of yes or no. This simplification was made in effort to better understand the number of individuals who do not identify as heterosexual while not limiting an individual to identify with the categories used in previous years.
- A question that asked respondents to describe their race or ethnicity to further understand the racial identities of those experiencing homelessness and included in the count. The question included a list of applicable answers, with an open 'other' option where respondents could specify their response. This also included a refinement of the Indigenous identity question that required participants who identified as Indigenous to skip the question regarding race and ethnicity. Due to methodological issues, reliable data was not obtained and therefore analysis of this question is not included in this report. For further information regarding this process, please see Limitations section.

2.4.4 Enumerating the Sheltered Homeless

The sheltered component of the count enumerated individuals who were experiencing homelessness and staying in emergency (including EWR shelters which were open on the night of the count), transition houses, detox facilities and safe houses on the night of March 12, 2019.⁹

Data Collection

Three approaches were used to gather information for this group:

1. Staff at transition houses, safe houses and detox facilities and emergency shelters completed the survey with their clients on the night of the count.
2. Volunteers conducted surveys in the remaining emergency shelters that were open on the night of the count (March 12th). Included in this group are the temporary winter shelters, EWR shelters and year-round shelters.
3. Vancouver Coastal Health, Providence Health Care and the Vancouver Police Department provided anonymous information on individuals staying in their facilities on the night of the count night who have No Fixed Address (NFA).

On the evening of March 12th, interviewers obtained consent from clients staying in shelters and other facilities to proceed with the survey. Individuals staying at these locations were asked a series of screening questions to determine if they were 'screened in', and if so, then interviewers proceeded with the rest of the questions.

⁹ For a list of participating programs please see Appendix 4.

This year, as in past years, interviews were conducted in all Vancouver emergency shelters, including those funded directly by BC Housing. BC Housing also provides shelter data information that is used to cross-check survey data and to ensure there are no anomalous findings in the total number.

Additionally, the staff at each shelter, transition house, safe house and detox facility were asked to complete a shelter statistics form to provide the total number of clients on the night of the count. This form is used to ensure all shelter clients were enumerated, including people who were missed by the survey, or who did not consent to participate in the survey and is used to determine the total number of sheltered individuals experiencing homelessness.

2.4.5 Enumerating the Unsheltered Homeless

The unsheltered count took place during the day of March 13th. The unsheltered portion of the count includes individuals those who stayed overnight outside without a physical shelter, in their vehicle, or who stayed at someone else's place without paying rent.

Site Identification

In order to ensure as many people as possible are found on the day of the count, the City, in consultation service providers, including outreach teams and our Indigenous partners worked together to identify known locations where people sleeping outside may be found. This information was used to create routes so that trained volunteers could be sent to these known locations to ask individuals to participate in the survey. Identified locations included meal programs, drop-in centres, some social services offices, parks, alleys and public spaces.¹⁰

Data Collection

On the day of the count (beginning at 6:00 AM on March 13th), trained volunteers were sent out in pairs on assigned routes and approached people to request an interview. When an individual provided consent to participate in the survey, they were asked the screening questions. If the individual, or respondent, qualified for the survey, i.e. was 'screened in', the volunteer proceeded to conduct the rest of the survey with the respondent.

Additionally, the staff of some service agencies completed the survey with their clients on count day (e.g. organizations that preferred their staff fill out surveys, rather than have volunteers enter the space).

People who indicated they had stayed in a shelter the night before were asked to complete the unsheltered survey if they also indicated they had not completed a shelter survey. The responses from these individuals were re-categorized as 'sheltered' responses to gain a better understanding of the demographic information for individuals who had accessed shelters.

2.5 Limitations

This report does not capture everyone who was experiencing homelessness on the day of the count. While an effort was made to enumerate all sheltered and unsheltered individuals experiencing homelessness, it was not possible to assign volunteers to all parts of the city, for them to spend an entire day in one area, or to interview all people experiencing homelessness.

¹⁰ The mapping routes used by the volunteers included the pre-identified locations where an individual experiencing homeless may be sleeping are not included in this report to protect the anonymity of the respondents.

The Point-in-Time count also does not reflect the number of people who transition in and out of homelessness over a longer period, for example, one year. Despite these limitations, the Point-in-Time methodology is considered an effective tool for collecting data on homelessness for a single point in time. When this approach is consistent with past counts, comparisons between years and demographic trends can be established. Other limiting factors include:

Lack of Willingness to Participate

Many people who are experiencing homelessness do not want to be counted and prefer to remain hidden. As the count occurs in Vancouver every year survey fatigue could be an issue. Stigma associated with homelessness also can impact a person's willingness to participate in the count or to be identified as experiencing homelessness.

Hidden Homelessness

The hidden homeless, for the purpose of the count, includes people who may be staying with friends (couch surfing), or in parks, vehicles, or abandoned buildings and other locations where volunteers are not able to find them. Research also shows that youth and women may couch surf or live in unsafe situations to avoid street homelessness.

Disruption of the Indigenous Magnet Event

During the 2019 count there was a disruption at the Magnet Event held at Oppenheimer Park. The City of Vancouver recognize their role and the following is from the City of Vancouver's report to council, *Rapid Responses to Homelessness Through Partnerships*.¹¹

"On the day of this year's homeless count, regularly scheduled Oppenheimer Park safety review operations interrupted the homeless count magnet event organized by our Indigenous partners at the park. By carrying out the weekly park safety review, participants were disrupted from enjoying food and entertainment being provided at the event. We recognize that the regular weekly safety review should have been postponed from the day of the Homeless Count; there was an internal miscommunication that resulted in this very unfortunate conflict of activities. We value our relationship with our Indigenous Homeless Count partners and acknowledge their legitimate and understandable frustration with the impacts this lack of coordination had on their important event. Staff have apologized to our partners and are committed to acknowledging our mistakes when we make them and to re-building our relationships in order to move forward to a safer and more inclusive future for Vancouver."

Exclusion of the Results of the Race/Ethnicity Question

During the 2019 count, a question was added in the survey that asked individuals about their race and ethnic identity. This followed a question asking people if they identify as Indigenous. A skip logic was applied, where if someone answered that they identify as Indigenous that they would be excluded from answering the question regarding race and ethnic identity. This compromised the methodological integrity of the question and the ability to collect data for all survey respondents. As a result, analysis is not included in this report for the question pertaining to race and ethnic identity.

The City of Vancouver has taken full responsibility and apologized to its partners. The City has committed to work with its partners to create a process that ensures the methodological integrity of maintaining trend data for the Indigenous identity question, as well addressing factors that excluded the race and ethnic identity data being adequately collected in the future.

11 Report to Council available at <https://council.vancouver.ca/20190612/documents/pspc1a.pdf>

Response Rates

The response rate for the shelter count (Table 1) was 48%, a decrease from 58% in 2018.

Table 1: Shelter Survey Response Rates and Total Sheltered Homeless

Shelter Survey Response Rates and Total Sheltered Homeless	#	%
Survey Respondents	691	48%
Survey Non-Respondents	745	52%
Total Surveyed	1,436	100%
Not asked (NFAs and children)	173	
Total Sheltered	1,609	

Shelter response rates vary year by year as several factors influence an individual's ability or desire to participate. Typically, volunteers are in the shelter for a two-hour shift. Depending on the shelter, a shift can start as early as 5:00 PM and end as late as 10:00 PM. The limited window for volunteers to conduct interviews results in shelter guests who arrive after their shift is completed not being interviewed.

If staff are also unable to interview a guest, either because they arrive after volunteers leave or they do not consent to the interview, they will still be counted by the shelter statistics form, though they will not provide demographic information.

3 | Demographics and Characteristics of Vancouver's Homeless Population

This section presents the demographics and characteristics for the individuals who were identified as experiencing homelessness.

3.1 Sheltered and Unsheltered

A total of 2,223 individuals, were identified as experiencing homelessness on March 13, 2019; 72% were sheltered and 28% were unsheltered (Table 2). The majority of individuals who were identified as experiencing homelessness were adults or unaccompanied youth (2,180 or 98%). Forty-three accompanied children under 19 years of age, with a parent or guardian were identified as experiencing homelessness. Of these children, 26 were staying in a shelter, 15 were staying in transition houses, and 2 had no fixed address.

Table 2: Sheltered and Unsheltered Individuals

Sheltered and Unsheltered by Age	Adults and Unaccompanied Youth		Accompanied Children		Total Homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Sheltered Total	1,566	72%	43	100%	1,609	72%
Shelters	1,284	59%	26	60%	1,310	59%
Transition Houses	27	1%	15	35%	42	2%
Detox Centres	47	2%	0	0%	47	2%
Safe Houses	14	1%	0	0%	14	1%
EWR	64	3%	0	0%	64	3%
No Fixed Address	130	6%	2	5%	132	6%
Unsheltered Total	614	28%	0	0%	614	28%
Total Individuals Experiencing Homelessness	2,180	100%	43	100%	2,223	100%

3.2 Change in Individuals Experiencing Homelessness in Vancouver

Figure 2 and Table 3 illustrate the trend in the number of sheltered, unsheltered, and total number of individuals experiencing homelessness over time.

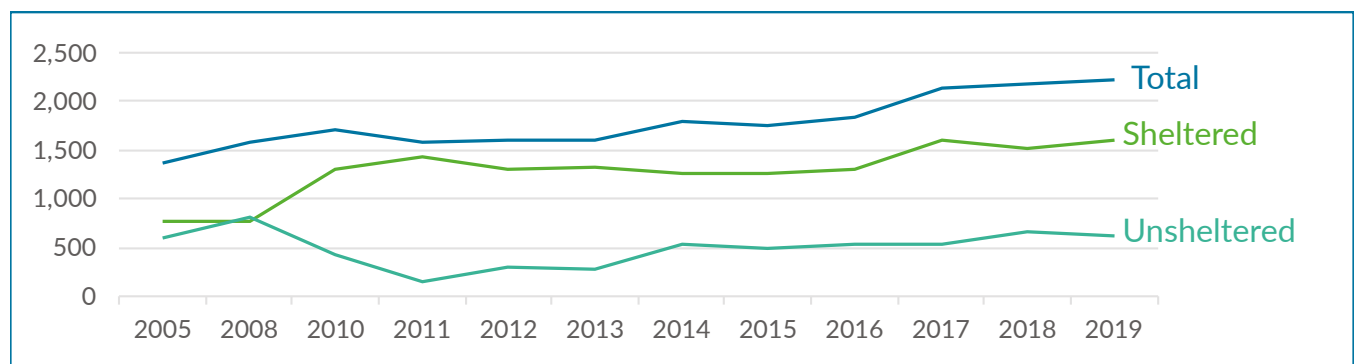


Figure 2: Vancouver Homeless Population Trends 2005 to 2019

Table 3: Vancouver Homeless Population Trends 2005-2019

Vancouver Homeless Population Trends 2005-2019	2005	2008	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Change 2005-2019	
													#	%
Sheltered	773	765	1,294	1,427	1,296	1,327	1,267	1,258	1,308	1,601	1,522	1,609	836	108%
Unsheltered	591	811	421	154	306	273	536	488	539	537	659	614	23	4%
Total	1,364	1,576	1,715	1,581	1,602	1,600	1,803	1,746	1,847	2,138	2,181	2,223	859	63%

Figure 3 below illustrates the distribution of individuals experiencing homelessness in terms of their sheltered and unsheltered status between 2005 and 2019. Looking back, 2008 remains the only year where there was a higher proportion of unsheltered survey respondents compared to sheltered survey respondents. Between 2005 and 2019, there was an increase of 63% among sheltered and unsheltered survey respondents (859 individuals). Since 2017, the rate of growth annually has also slowed slightly (2%).

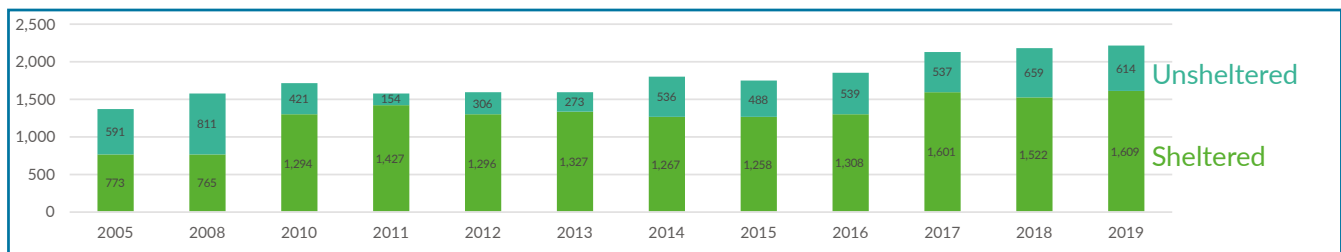


Figure 3: Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless Population Trends 2005-2019

3.3 Indigenous Identity

A total of 495 survey respondents identified as Indigenous, representing 39% of all respondents. According to the 2016 Census, Indigenous people represented only 2.2% of Vancouver’s total population demonstrating the vast over representation in the homeless counts. The proportion of respondents identifying as Indigenous was higher for unsheltered (46%) than sheltered respondents (34%).

Table 4: Indigenous Identity

Indigenous Identity	Sheltered		Unsheltered		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Indigenous Identity	225	34%	270	46%	495	39%
First Nations	152	23%	185	32%	337	27%
Inuit	6	1%	1	0%	7	1%
Métis	41	6%	52	9%	93	7%
Not listed	15	2%	13	2%	28	2%
Indigenous, unspecified	11	2%	19	3%	30	2%
Not Indigenous	446	66%	314	54%	760	61%
Respondents	671	100%	584	100%	1,255	100%
Don't Know / No Answer/ unclear	938		30		968	
Total	1,609		614		2,223	

3.4 Gender Identity

The majority of survey respondents identified as men/male (76%) and 23% responded as women/female¹² and one percent (1%) identified as non-binary (Table 5). A similar proportion of sheltered and unsheltered respondents identified as female and male, with a slightly greater proportion of respondents who identify as non-binary being unsheltered.

Table 5: Gender Identity¹³

Gender Identity	Sheltered		Unsheltered		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Man/Male	524	77%	435	76%	959	76%
Woman/Female	151	22%	132	23%	283	23%
Non-Binary	5	1%	9	2%	14	1%
Respondents	680	100%	576	100%	1,256	100%
Don't Know / No Answer/ unclear	929		38		967	
Total	1,609		614		2,223	

In the 2019 count, respondents were also asked if they identify as someone with trans experience (i.e. meaning a person's gender identity is different than when they were born). Five percent (5%), or 61 respondents, identified as having transgender experience (Table 6).

Table 6: Individuals Identifying as Having Transgender Experience

Individuals Identifying as Having Transgender Experience	Sheltered		Unsheltered		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Transgender Experience	34	5%	27	5%	61	5%
No Transgender Experience	635	95%	529	95%	1,164	95%
Respondents	669	100%	556	100%	1,225	100%
Don't Know / No Answer/ unclear	940		58		998	
Total	1,609		614		2,223	

12 Previous Homeless Count reports and community agencies have stated that women tend to be part of the hidden homeless population, often staying with families and friends or in unsafe situations rather than stay on the streets or access services for the homeless. As such, they are likely to be undercounted using a Point-in-Time count methodology.

13 Percentage total does not equal 100% due to rounding.

3.5 Age

The majority of survey respondents (69%) were adults, 24% were seniors (55+ years of age) and 8% were unaccompanied youth (under 25 years of age). Among survey respondents, seniors (88%) and youth (61%) were more likely to be sheltered than unsheltered, while adults were evenly split (51% unsheltered).

Table 7: Age¹⁴

Age	Sheltered		Unsheltered		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Under 19 ¹⁵	9	1%	1	0%	10	1%
19-24	48	7%	36	6%	84	7%
25-34	122	18%	159	27%	281	22%
35-44	118	17%	170	29%	288	23%
45-54	184	27%	117	20%	301	24%
55-64	142	21%	71	12%	213	17%
65-74	51	8%	21	4%	72	6%
75+	3	0%	8	1%	11	1%
Respondents	677	100%	583	100%	1,260	100%
Don't Know / No Answer/ unclear	932		31		963	
Total	1,609		614		2,223	

3.6 Health Concerns

Survey participants were asked about their health and whether they had a medical condition or illness, physical disability, addiction, and/or mental health issue. A medical condition refers to chronic problems like asthma and diabetes, while physical disability refers to condition affecting mobility or movement. If a survey participant reported an addiction, they were also asked to specify the substance(s) they were addicted to, including alcohol, cigarettes, marijuana, cocaine, methamphetamine, opioids, or another substance.

As shown in Table 8, the majority (60%) of survey respondents reported two or more health concerns, while 12% reported no health conditions. Sheltered respondents were twice as likely to report no health concerns than unsheltered respondents (16% to 8%) and were also noticeably less likely to report health concerns in all four categories (9% for sheltered to 16% for unsheltered).

¹⁴ Percentage total does not equal 100% due to rounding.

¹⁵ Please note that this refers to children under 19 who responded to the survey, which differs from the 43 children enumerated who were accompanied by an adult and did not fill out a survey.

Table 8: Incidence of Health Concerns^{16, 17, 18}

Incidence of Health Concerns	Sheltered		Unsheltered		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
No Health Concerns	106	16%	44	8%	150	12%
One Health Concern	179	27%	155	28%	334	27%
Two Health Concerns	194	29%	160	29%	354	29%
Three Health Concerns	130	20%	103	19%	233	19%
Four Health Concerns	57	9%	88	16%	145	12%
Respondents	666	100%	550	100%	1,216	100%
Don't Know / No Answer/ unclear	943		64		1,007	
Total	1,609		614		2,223	

Table 9 shows that that 44% of respondents indicated they have a medical conditions/illness, and 44% indicated they have a mental health issue. Thirty-eight percent (38%) of survey respondents reported a physical disability. Unsheltered respondents were more likely to report a mental health issue and physical disability than sheltered respondents.

Table 9: Types of Health Concerns¹⁹

Types of Health Concerns	Sheltered		Unsheltered		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Medical Condition/Illness	292	44%	244	44%	536	44%
Physical Disability	242	36%	215	39%	457	38%
Mental Health Issue	269	40%	264	48%	533	44%
Responses	666	100%	550	100%	1,216	100%

Respondents were asked to report any addiction issues, Figure 4 shows that 31% of survey respondents reported no addiction, 22% reported an addiction to one substance, and 45% reported an addiction to two or more substances.

The 65% who reported an addiction were also asked to specify the substance(s) as shown in Figure 5. Of those who reported an addiction, 38% identified an addiction to cigarettes, followed by opioids (33%), methamphetamine (29%), alcohol (22%), marijuana (21%), cocaine (14%), and other substances (5%).²⁰

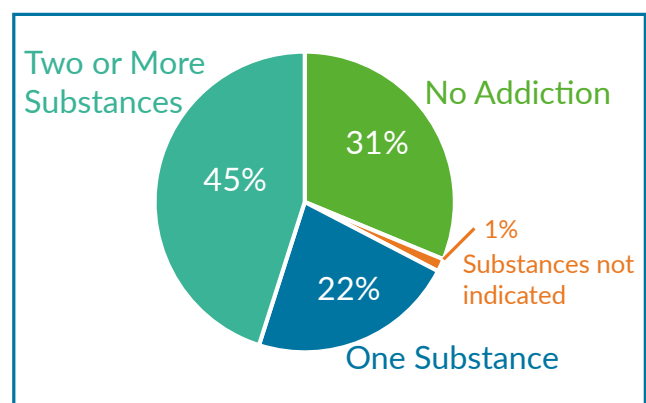


Figure 4: Number of Substances

16 Includes medical condition or illness, physical disability, mental health issue, addiction issue.

17 Includes all respondents who provided at least one "Yes" or "No" answer across at least 1 of the 4 questions regarding health concerns (for example, a respondent who indicated a medical condition/illness, but declined to indicate the presence or lack of the other 3 health concerns would be included in the "one health concern" category, and an individual who indicated no medical condition/illness and declined to indicate the presence or lack of another health concern would be included in "no health concerns". As a result, the only individuals who appear in the "don't know / no answer / unclear" category are those who indicated "don't know", provided no answer, or were unclear for all 4 health related questions, or those who were counted in shelters, but did not complete a survey).

18 Percentage total does not equal 100% due to rounding.

19 The number of responses was based on the number of respondents who provided at minimum one valid response (yes/no) to one of the four health related questions.

20 Other substances included caffeine/coffee, ecstasy, painkillers, gambling, GHB, LSD, women, sex, and mushrooms.

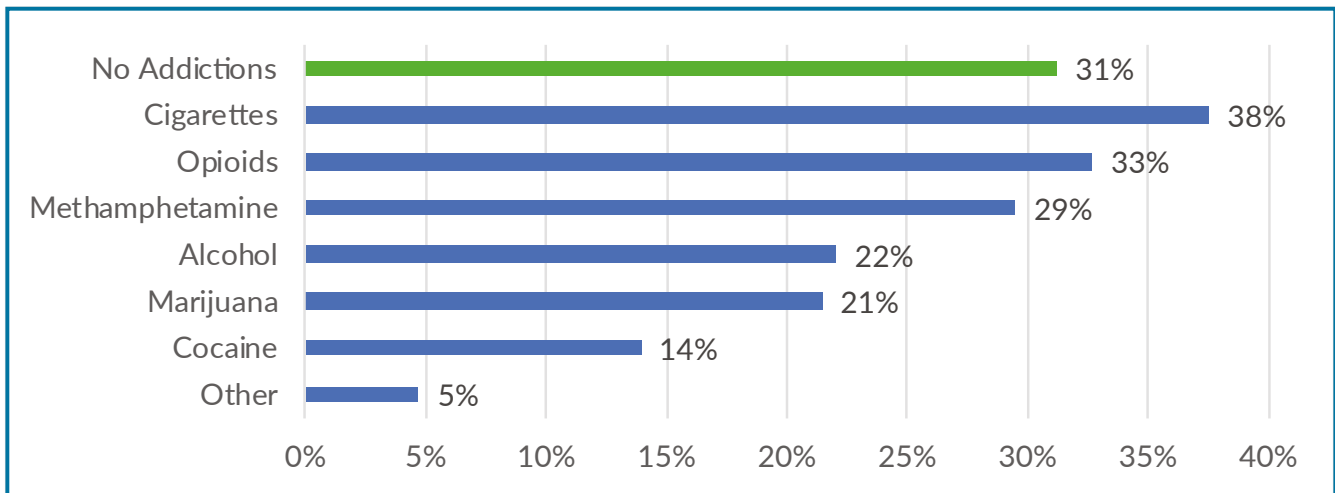


Figure 5: Types of Addictions Issues ²¹

3.7 Sources of Income

Survey participants were asked to identify their sources of income and could identify as many sources as needed (Table 10). Survey respondents indicated a wide range of income sources. The most frequently reported sources of income were welfare/income assistance (42%), followed by disability benefits (31%), and part-time or casual employment (11%). A greater proportion of unsheltered survey respondents reported receiving welfare/income assistance (45%) than sheltered respondents (39%).

Sheltered survey respondents were more likely than unsheltered respondents to report income from part-time or casual employment. Fifteen percent (15%) of sheltered survey respondents reported receiving part-time or casual employment income, and 7% reported receiving full-time employment income. Sheltered survey respondents were more likely to report receiving Canada Pension Plan (CPP) or other pension benefits than unsheltered survey respondents (11% to 4%).

Unsheltered survey respondents were also more likely than sheltered survey respondents to identify binning/ bottle collection (16% to 5%), panhandling (11% to 4%), and vending (15% to 4%). Nine percent (9%) of survey respondents indicated that they had no income source. While the majority of survey respondents indicated that they had one income source (60%), a third (33%) indicated having multiple income sources (Table 11).

²¹ Proportions were calculated as follows: “No addiction issue” is the proportion of respondents who indicated they had no addiction issue, of all those who gave a clear answer to the addictions question; all proportions related to a specific substance were calculated as the number of individuals who both indicated an addiction issue and selected that specific substance, as a proportion of all those who answered the addiction question clearly.

Table 10: Income Sources²²

Income Sources	Sheltered		Unsheltered		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Welfare/Income assistance	263	39%	255	45%	518	42%
Disability benefits	212	32%	169	30%	381	31%
Employment part-time or casual	103	15%	39	7%	142	11%
Binning/bottles	31	5%	93	16%	124	10%
Other	27	4%	74	13%	101	8%
CPP or other pension	71	11%	20	4%	91	7%
Panhandling	27	4%	65	11%	92	7%
Vending	30	4%	84	15%	114	9%
Employment full-time	44	7%	11	2%	55	4%
OAS/GIS	34	5%	11	2%	45	4%
Employment insurance	8	1%	1	0%	9	1%
Honoraria	21	3%	12	2%	33	3%
Youth agreement	2	0%	1	0%	3	0%
No income ²³	59	9%	48	8%	107	9%
Respondents	671	100%	568	100%	1,239	100%
Don't Know / No Answer/ unclear	938		46		984	
Total	1,609		614		2,223	

Table 11: Number of Income Sources²⁴

Number of Income Sources	Sheltered		Unsheltered		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
No Income Source Identified ²⁵	52	8%	41	7%	93	8%
One Income Source	432	64%	310	55%	742	60%
Multiple Income Sources	187	28%	217	38%	404	33%
Respondents	671	100%	568	100%	1,239	100%
Don't Know / No Answer/ unclear	938		46		984	
Total	1,609		614		2,223	

22 Numbers will not add up to "Response" totals or "Total" as some respondents reported multiple income sources.

23 "No income" includes only those who selected the option "No income" - in some cases those who selected this option also indicated an income source. 14 individuals indicated "no income" as well as another income source.

24 Percentage total does not equal 100% due to rounding.

25 This only includes respondents that indicated non income source and did not indicate another income source.

3.8 Length of Time in Vancouver

Table 12 shows that the majority (80%) of survey respondents indicated that they have lived in Vancouver for more than one year, and 15% indicated they have lived here all their lives. A greater proportion of unsheltered survey respondents than sheltered respondents reported living in Vancouver for more than one year (85% to 75%). Twenty-one percent (21%) of survey respondents indicated they had been in Vancouver for less than one year, with 14% arriving less than 6 months ago.

Table 12: Length of Time in Vancouver²⁶

Length of Time in Vancouver	Sheltered		Unsheltered		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Less than 6 months	130	19%	39	7%	169	14%
6 months to 1 year	40	6%	42	8%	82	7%
Over 1 year ²⁷	501	75%	475	85%	976	80%
Respondents	671	100%	556	100%	1,227	100%
Don't Know / No Answer/ unclear	938		58		996	
Total	1,609		614		2,223	

3.9 Place of Residence Prior to Vancouver

Table 13 shows where respondents were living before their arrival in Vancouver. Sixteen percent (16%) had been living elsewhere in Metro Vancouver; 31% elsewhere in British Columbia, 44% elsewhere in Canada outside of British Columbia, and 9% outside of Canada.

Table 13: Place of Residence Prior to Vancouver^{28,29}

Place of Residence Prior to Vancouver	Sheltered		Unsheltered		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Elsewhere in Metro Vancouver	91	17%	65	15%	156	16%
Rest of British Columbia	147	27%	152	35%	299	31%
Rest of Canada	240	44%	195	45%	435	44%
Outside of Canada	64	12%	25	6%	89	9%
Respondents	542	100%	437	100%	979	100%
Don't know / no answer / unclear / always in Vancouver	1,067		177		1,244	
Total	1,609		614		2,223	

²⁶ Percentage total does not equal 100% due to rounding.

²⁷ This figure includes 189 individuals who indicated they have always lived in Vancouver (91 sheltered, 98 unsheltered)

²⁸ Indicates where respondents are from, regardless of their location when they became homeless.

²⁹ Percentage total does not equal 100% due to rounding.

3.10 Length of Time Homelessness

As shown in Table 14, 44% of survey respondents had been homeless for less than one year, while 40% had been homeless between one and five years. Sheltered survey respondents are more likely to have been homeless for less than a year than unsheltered respondents (52% compared to 36%).

Table 14: Length of Time Homeless³⁰

Length of Time Homeless	Sheltered		Unsheltered		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Up to 6 months ³¹	230	35%	100	18%	330	27%
>6 months up to 1 year	115	17%	99	18%	214	17%
>1 year up to 5 years	228	34%	267	48%	495	40%
>5 years up to 10 years	52	8%	63	11%	115	9%
>10 years	41	6%	31	6%	72	6%
Respondents	666	100%	560	100%	1,226	100%
Don't Know / No Answer/ unclear	943		54		997	
Total	1,609		614		2,223	

3.11 Living in Vancouver When Became Homeless

Table 15 illustrates that the majority (81%) of survey respondents last had a home of their own in Vancouver.

Table 15: Where Living When Became Homeless³²

Where Living When Became Homeless	Sheltered		Unsheltered		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Already living in Vancouver when they became homeless	457	79%	382	82%	839	81%
Living elsewhere when they became homeless	119	21%	82	18%	201	19%
Respondents	576	100%	464	100%	1,040	100%
Don't Know / No Answer/ unclear	1,033		150		1,183	
Total	1,609		614		2,223	

30 Percentage total does not equal 100% due to rounding.

31 Includes 5 respondents who indicated they had been homeless for zero days.

32 Included are all respondents who provided a valid response to "How long have you been without a place of your own?" and "How long have you been in Vancouver?" If a respondent indicated the same length of time for both questions it was deemed unclear. If someone indicated, they do not live in Vancouver they were categorized as becoming homeless elsewhere.

3.12 Where Unsheltered Stayed Night of the Count

Unsheltered survey participants were asked where they had stayed the previous night. Sixty-one percent (61%) of unsheltered survey respondents indicated they had stayed outside on the night of the count. The remaining respondents indicates they stayed at someone else’s place where or couch surfed (17%), stayed in a makeshift shelter or tent (11%), in a vehicle or RV (5%) or an ‘other’ location (4%).

Table 16: Where the unsheltered homeless stayed the night of the count³³

Where the unsheltered homeless stayed the night of the count	Unsheltered Total	
	#	%
Outside	377	61%
In a makeshift shelter or tent	69	11%
In a vehicle	31	5%
On a boat - not paying moorage	0	0%
Abandoned/vacant building	2	0%
Someone else's or a friend's place	106	17%
Parent or Guardian's place - This is a temporary situation and I do not have a house or apartment I can safely return to	3	0%
Other	26	4%
Unsheltered Respondents	614	100%

Survey participants who were unsheltered were asked the main reason why they did not stay in a shelter on the night of the count. Respondents indicated that they disliked the shelter (17%), they don’t feel safe at a shelter (11%), or they were able to stay with a friend (11%). Additionally, 9% indicated they were turned away, though the reason for the turn away was not listed. Almost half (46%) of survey respondents indicated reasons not listed within the survey.³⁴

Table 17: Reasons for Not Staying in a Shelter

Reasons for Not Staying in a Shelter	Unsheltered Total	
	#	%
Able to stay with a friend	60	11%
Dislike	87	17%
Don't feel safe	58	11%
Turned away	50	9%
Bedbugs / pests	23	4%
Stayed in safe house/transition house/hospital/jail/detox	5	1%
Other reasons	244	46%
Respondents	527	100%
Don't Know / No Answer/ unclear	87	
Total	614	

³³ Percentage total does not equal 100% due to rounding.

³⁴ Reasons include concerns with shelter staff, feeling shelters are not for them, that they prefer to be alone, or inability to access shelters with pets among others.

3.13 Shelter Stay in the Last 12 Months

Survey participants who were unsheltered were asked if they had stayed in a shelter in the previous 12 months. As shown in Table 18, the majority (54%) of unsheltered survey respondents had stayed in a shelter in the past 12 months.

Table 18: Shelter Stays in the 12 Months Prior to the 2019 Homeless Count

Shelter Stays in the 12 Months Prior to the 2019 Homeless Count	Unsheltered Total	
	#	%
No Stay in Shelter	256	46%
Stay in Shelter	305	54%
Respondents	561	100%
Don't Know / No Answer/ unclear	53	
Total	614	

3.14 Military Service

Survey participants were asked if they had ever served in the Canadian Forces, including the army, navy, air force or RCMP. Seven percent (7%) of survey respondents had served in the Canadian Forces. The proportion of survey respondents who had served in the Canadian Forces was greater for unsheltered than sheltered respondents (9% to 6%).

Table 19: Military Service in the Canadian Forces³⁵

Where Living Most Recent Time Became Homeless	Sheltered		Unsheltered		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Service in Canadian Forces (including RCMP)	41	6%	50	9%	91	7%
No service in the Canadian Forces	620	92%	498	90%	1,118	91%
Other Armed Forces	11	2%	6	1%	17	1%
Respondents	672	100%	554	100%	1,226	100%
Don't Know / No Answer/ unclear	937		60		997	
Total	1,609		614		2,223	

35 Percentage total does not equal 100% due to rounding.

4 | Profiles

4.1 Indigenous Profile

As reported earlier, 495 survey respondents (39%) identified as Indigenous. Survey respondents identifying as Indigenous were more likely to be unsheltered than non-Indigenous respondents (55% to 41%). Survey respondents identifying as Indigenous women/females were overrepresented in the count compared to survey respondents who identified as non-Indigenous women/female (30% to 18%).

Table 20 shows that survey respondents who identified as non-binary are also more likely to identify as Indigenous (64%) than respondents who identified as woman/female (53%) or man/male (35%).

Table 20: Gender by Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Identity

Gender by Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Identity	Women		Men		Non-Binary		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Indigenous	149	53%	333	35%	9	64%	491	40%
Non-Indigenous	133	47%	609	65%	5	36%	747	60%
Responses	282	100%	942	100%	14	100%	1,238	100%

As indicated in Table 21, 45% of youth identified as Indigenous, while 43% of adults, and 27% of seniors identified as Indigenous. Compared to the total number of Aboriginal/Indigenous individuals that live in Vancouver, Indigenous individuals were overrepresented across all age categories in the count.

Table 21: Age Profile: Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Identity

Age by Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Identity	Youth (24 and under)		Adults (25 to 54)		Seniors (55+)	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Indigenous	42	45%	367	43%	78	27%
Non-Indigenous	52	55%	489	57%	210	73%
Responses	94	100%	856	100%	288	100%

4.2 Women/Female Profile

Within survey respondents who were both youth and identified as women/female (34%), there was a higher proportion that was unsheltered than sheltered (44% to 27%). This contrasts adult women/females who were comparable between sheltered and unsheltered, and seniors where women/females were more likely to be sheltered than unsheltered (17% to 7%).

Survey respondents who identified as women/female were slightly more likely to identify health concerns compared to men/males across all four health categories, most significantly in regard to mental health issues, where 40% of men/males respondents indicated a mental health issue, compared to 54% of women/female respondents. Further, unsheltered women/female respondents were more likely to indicate a mental health issue than sheltered women/female respondents (57% compared to 50%).

While 65% of all survey respondents indicated an addictions challenge, it was significantly higher for unsheltered women/females survey respondents at 86%.

4.3 Age Profile

As expected, senior (age 55+) survey respondents reported more medical conditions (54%) and physical disability (48%) than adults (25-54) or youth (under 25). Alternatively, there were a higher percentage of youth (48%) and adult (46%) survey respondents that identified having a mental health issue than seniors (35%).

In each age category across all health concerns, unsheltered survey respondents were more likely to identify them than sheltered survey respondents. The largest discrepancies include youth who indicated they have an addiction (48% sheltered vs 83% unsheltered) and youth respondents who indicated they had a physical disability (9% sheltered vs. 29% unsheltered).

Youth survey respondents were more likely to identify as not heterosexual (23%) compared to adults (9%) or seniors (5%). It is notable that the number of respondents who identified as men/male increased from youth (61%) to adults (75%) to seniors (86%).

5 | Conclusion

Homelessness is a complex challenge in Vancouver as it is in many cities in the region and across the country. Homeless counts are used as a planning and policy tool by governments and service providers, and to assess current efforts to reduce homelessness. The 2019 Vancouver Homeless Count was commissioned by the City of Vancouver and conducted on March 13th, 2019 to update the enumeration and better understand the demographics and characteristics of individuals experiencing homelessness in the city. The 2019 Homeless Count identified 2,223 individuals experiencing homelessness in Vancouver, which is recognized as an undercount due to methodological limitations. This report presented an analysis of the following demographics and characteristics of individuals experiencing homelessness in Vancouver:

- Indigenous identity
- Gender identity
- Age
- Health concerns
- Sources of income
- Length of time in Vancouver
- Living in Vancouver when became homeless
- Place of residence prior to Vancouver
- Duration of homelessness
- Military service
- Shelter stays in the last 12 months

Appendix 1 | Homelessness Trends

Tables A1-A8 show demographic and characteristic homelessness trends between 2005 and 2019.³⁶ It is important to note that several contextual factors exist when examining trends. First, as the counts do not capture all of the individuals experiencing homelessness in Vancouver, portions of the fluctuations may be due to increasing or decreasing response rates, rather than increasing or decreasing numbers of homeless individuals. A higher or lower proportion of homeless individuals counted may be driven by chance, methodological changes, or other contextual factors.

When drawing analysis between slight variations in the overall number of people counted year by year caution must be taken. Taking a broad outlook, while acknowledging the count effectiveness has increased through experience, there is likely an upward trend in the number of people that are experiencing homelessness in Vancouver.

³⁶ It is also important to note that wording or format of some questions have changed over the years the count has been conducted, which may have an impact on the trend analysis conducted in this report. This potential limitation is acknowledged in this report when applicable.

Table A1 : Indigenous Identity Trends

Indigenous Identity Trends	2005		2008		2010		2011		2012		2013		2014		2015		2016		2017		2018		2019	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Indigenous	352	35%	456	38%	448	36%	268	31%	362	32%	369	30%	415	36%	342	32%	420	38%	448	39%	561	40%	495	39%
Non-Indigenous	658	65%	749	62%	805	64%	594	69%	768	68%	876	70%	738	64%	731	68%	692	62%	705	61%	846	60%	760	61%
Responses	1,010	100%	1,205	100%	1,253	100%	862	100%	1,130	100%	1,245	100%	1,153	100%	1,073	100%	1,112	100%	1,153	100%	1,407	100%	1,255	100%
Don't know / no answer / unclear	281		167		291		290		204		189		53		40		64		68		43		50	
Total Surveyed	1,291		1,372		1,544		1,152		1,334		1,434		1,206		1,113		1,176		1,221		1,450		1,305	

Table A2: Gender Trends in the Homeless Population

Gender Trends	2005		2008		2010		2011		2012		2013		2014		2015		2016		2017		2018		2019	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Man/Male	928	73%	948	72%	1,155	78%	901	73%	960	73%	1,017	73%	907	76%	1,057	74%	868	76%	902	76%	1,064	75%	959	76%
Woman/Female	330	26%	348	27%	333	22%	327	27%	347	26%	361	26%	282	24%	356	25%	266	23%	263	22%	338	24%	283	23%
Transgender ³⁷	8	1%	15	1%	n/a	n/a	5	0%	6	0%	7	1%	7	1%	15	1%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Non-Binary/Another Gender Identity ³⁸	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	8	1%	9	1%	19	2%	16	1%	14	1%
Responses	1,266	100%	1,311	100%	1,488	100%	1,233	100%	1,313	100%	1,385	100%	1,196	100%	1,436	100%	1,143	100%	1,184	100%	1,418	100%	1,256	100%
Don't know / no answer / unclear	25		61		21		264		21		40		10		310		33		37		32		49	
Total Surveyed	1,291		1,372		1,509		1,497		1,334		1,425		1,206		1,746		1,176		1,221		1,450		1,305	

37 The form of the relevant questions in the survey has changed several times since 2005. This occurred in 2015, 2016, and again in 2019 in consultation with experts in efforts to be more inclusive.

38 The form of the relevant question in the survey changed in 2019 in consultation with experts in efforts to be more inclusive.

Table A3: Age Groups Trends

Age Trends	2005		2008		2010		2011		2012		2013		2014		2015		2016		2017		2018		2019	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Under 19 years	30	2%	19	1%	25	2%	44	4%	57	4%	36	3%	93	8%	59	5%	44	4%	14	1%	6	0%	10	1%
19-24	149	12%	135	10%	159	11%	146	14%	137	10%	139	10%	162	13%	140	12%	127	11%	108	9%	119	8%	84	7%
25-34	273	22%	258	20%	264	18%	197	19%	267	20%	256	19%	224	18%	228	19%	229	20%	235	20%	307	22%	281	22%
35-44	402	33%	425	32%	363	25%	251	24%	316	24%	358	26%	251	20%	250	21%	280	24%	280	24%	327	23%	288	23%
45-54	260	21%	361	28%	445	30%	250	24%	339	26%	324	24%	300	24%	285	24%	285	24%	276	24%	357	25%	301	24%
55-64	98	8%	95	7%	163	11%	122	12%	163	12%	195	14%	162	13%	164	14%	149	13%	175	15%	214	15%	213	17%
65+	23	2%	19	1%	41	3%	33	3%	40	3%	69	5%	43	3%	58	5%	55	5%	69	6%	76	5%	83	7%
Responses	1,235	100%	1,312	100%	1,460	100%	1,043	100%	1,319	100%	1,377	100%	1,235	100%	1,184	100%	1,169	100%	1,157	100%	1,406	100%	1,260	100%
Don't know / no answer / unclear	56		60		84		114		45		48		14		20		39		64		44		45	
Total Surveyed	1,291		1,372		1,509		1,497		1,334		1,425		1,206		1,746		1,176		1,221		1,450		1,305	

Table A4: Incidence of Health Concerns Trends³⁹

Age Trends	2005		2008		2010		2011		2012		2013		2014		2015		2016		2017		2018		2019	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
No Health Concerns	263	26%	369	29%	277	21%	55	10%	156	17%	179	16%	237	22%	207	19%	241	21%	205	17%	234	17%	150	12%
One Health Concern	396	39%	329	26%	415	32%	208	38%	290	32%	289	26%	358	33%	397	36%	307	27%	365	31%	411	29%	334	27%
Two or More Health Concerns	349	35%	556	44%	622	47%	289	52%	451	50%	636	58%	481	45%	489	45%	576	51%	604	51%	754	54%	732	60%
Responses	1,008	100%	1,254	100%	1,314	100%	552	100%	897	100%	1,104	100%	1,076	100%	1,093	100%	1,124	100%	1,174	100%	1,399	100%	1,216	100%
Don't know / no answer / unclear	283		118		230		605		437		321		130		20		52		47		51		89	
Total Surveyed	1,291		1,372		1,544		1,157		1,334		1,425		1,206		1,113		1,176		1,221		1,450		1,305	

39 As with previous health related tables, the "respondents" referred to here are all those, of the relevant category, who provided a valid response to at least one of the health-related questions.

Table A5: Type of Health Concerns Trends⁴⁰

Type of Health Concerns Trends	2008		2010		2011		2012		2013		2014		2015		2016		2017		2018		2019	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Addiction/Substance Use	643	51%	721	55%	344	56%	532	59%	694	63%	519	48%	632	58%	603	53%	636	54%	870	62%	795	65%
Physical Disability	324	26%	368	28%	157	25%	265	30%	375	34%	302	28%	386	35%	345	31%	365	31%	478	34%	457	38%
Medical Concern/Illness	495	39%	503	38%	186	30%	325	36%	469	42%	439	41%	508	46%	479	42%	492	42%	564	40%	536	44%
Mental Health Issue	354	28%	471	36%	251	41%	361	40%	512	46%	361	34%	459	42%	450	40%	455	39%	550	39%	533	44%
Responses	1,254	100%	1,314	100%	n/a		897	100%	1,104	100%	1,076	100%	1,093	100%	1,131	100%	1,174	100%	1,399	100%	1,216	100%
Don't know / no answer / unclear	118		230		n/a		437		321		130		20		45		47		51		89	
Total Surveyed	1,372		1,544		1,157		1,334		1,425		1,206		1,113		1,176		1,221		1,450		1,305	

Table A6: Income Sources Trends

Income Source Trends	2008		2010		2011		2012		2013		2014		2015		2016		2017		2018		2019	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Government Transfers																						
Income Assistance or Welfare	533	43%	632	47%	286	44%	339	41%	381	38%	459	41%	403	37%	398	35%	467	40%	539	39%	518	42%
Disability Benefit	258	21%	286	21%	132	20%	176	21%	239	24%	218	20%	282	26%	301	27%	329	28%	406	30%	381	31%
Employment Insurance	13	1%	35	3%	17	3%	16	2%	15	2%	15	1%	24	2%	31	3%	15	1%	24	2%	9	1%
OAS, GIS, and CPP	4	0%	48	4%	28	4%	38	5%	56	6%	89	8%	67	6%	77	7%	132	11%	114	8%	136	11%
Other Sources																						
Part-Time Employment	163	13%	151	11%	97	15%	96	12%	135	14%	59	5%	229	21%	257	23%	277	23%	186	14%	142	11%
Full-Time Employment	79	6%	130	10%	71	11%	135	16%	157	16%	191	17%	150	14%	136	12%	103	9%	78	6%	55	4%
No Income	83	7%	409	30%	329	50%	160	19%	148	15%	120	11%	227	21%	231	20%	413	35%	351	26%	107	9%
Other	611	49%	1,344	100%	655	100%	834	100%	999	100%	1,107	100%	1,084	100%	1,130	100%	1,179	100%	1,376	100%	1,239	100%
Responses	1,242	100%	1,344	100%	655	100%	834	100%	999	100%	1,107	100%	1,084	100%	1,130	100%	1,179	100%	1,376	100%	1,239	100%
Don't know / no answer / unclear	130		200		502		500		426		99		29		46		42		74		66	
Total Surveyed	1,372		1,544		1,157		1,334		1,425		1,206		1,113		1,176		1,221		1,450		1,305	

40 An important change made in 2016 is that only self-reported health conditions were counted, while in the past volunteers had been asked to mark down unreported but perceived health conditions. Surveyors' perceptions of a homeless individual's health were not reported in 2016. While perceptions offer an opportunity to offset under-reporting of health conditions, observations are limited and volunteers are not trained as health practitioners and therefore are not in the position to assess a person's health.

Table A7: Duration of Homelessness

Duration of Homelessness	2005		2008		2010		2011		2013		2014		2015		2016		2017		2018		2019	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Under 1 Month	253	24%	145	12%	177	13%	145	12%	76	10%	180	16%	114	11%	174	15%	83	7%	86	6%	99	8%
1 Month to 6 Months	271	26%	319	27%	371	28%	319	27%	268	34%	365	33%	325	30%	311	27%	275	23%	329	24%	231	19%
6 Months to 1 Year	134	13%	152	13%	173	13%	152	13%	93	12%	91	8%	148	14%	212	19%	175	15%	284	21%	214	17%
1 Year or More	376	36%	585	49%	595	45%	585	49%	363	45%	473	43%	483	45%	437	39%	655	55%	661	49%	682	56%
Responses	1,034	100%	1,201	100%	1,316	100%	1,201	100%	800	100%	1,109	100%	1,070	100%	1,134	100%	1,188	100%	1,360	100%	1,226	100%
Don't know / no answer / unclear	257		171		228				52		97		43		42		33		90		79	
Total Surveyed	1,291		1,372		1,544				852		1,206		1,113		1,176		1,221		1,450		1,305	

Table A8: Where Unsheltered Homeless Stated Trends

Age Trends	2005		2008		2010		2011		2012		2013		2014		2015		2016		2017		2018		2019	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Combined Outside and Car/Garage and Public Building ⁴¹	411	70%	548	71%	284	69%	49	33%	205	69%	180	66%	339	64%	338	69%	385	71%	344	64%	486	74%	479	78%
Someone Else's Place	111	19%	129	17%	101	25%	69	47%	74	25%	87	32%	181	34%	123	25%	123	23%	118	22%	131	20%	109	18%
Other	69	12%	90	12%	24	6%	29	20%	17	6%	6	2%	13	2%	27	6%	31	6%	72	13%	42	6%	26	4%
Responses	591	100%	767	100%	409	100%	147	100%	296	100%	273	100%	533	100%	488	100%	539	100%	534	100%	659	100%	614	100%
Don't know / no answer / unclear	56		60		84		114		45		48		14		20		39		64		44		45	
Total Surveyed	1,291		1,372		1,509		1,497		1,334		1,425		1,206		1,746		1,176		1,221		1,450		1,305	

41. To analyze trends over time, certain responses are grouped together.

Appendix 2 | Definitions

The following terms are used throughout the report:

Unsheltered homeless	People who, on the night of the Count, had no physical shelter and stayed outside, on the street, in doorways, parkades, parks and on beaches and in other public locations, as well as people who stayed in their vehicle or at someone's place where they did not pay rent (couch surfing).
Sheltered homeless	People who, on the night of the Count, stayed in an emergency shelter, safe house or transition house for men, youth, women and their children, detox facility, as well as staying overnight in hospital or jail and having No Fixed Address (NFA).
Children	Young people under the age of 19 who were accompanied by a parent during the count.
Youth	Young people aged 16-24 who were not accompanied by a parent during the count.
Seniors	People aged 55 years and older.
Temporary Winter Response Shelters	Temporary shelters are opened annually through a partnership with the City of Vancouver and BC Housing. They provide additional shelter capacity to keep those experiencing homelessness safe and warm during the winter months. These shelters typically open November through March and allow pets, carts, couples, and follow a harm reduction model, based on Vancouver Coastal Health's guidance, to prevent overdoses.
Permanent Shelters	Permanent shelters are funded by the Province (BC Housing) and others, and are open year-round. These shelters serve of range of community members (women, men, seniors, youth) and offer a range of services. Depending on the operator, shelters may offer 24/7 service, meals, allow pets, carts, couples, and follow a harm reduction model.
Extreme Weather Response (EWR) Shelters	EWR shelters are provincially funded (through BC Housing) and delivered through partnerships with community-based service providers and faith-based organizations to provide additional temporary emergency shelter spaces during periods of extreme winter weather which threaten the health and safety of individuals experiencing homelessness. Four EWR shelters were operated on the night of the homeless count in 2019.

Appendix 3 | Survey



HOMELESS COUNT 2019 UNSHeltered SURVEY

INTERVIEWER NAME: _____

Nearest INTERSECTION: _____

START HERE: SCREENING QUESTIONS

- Participation is **voluntary** and your **name will not be recorded**.
- You can choose to **skip any question** or to **stop the interview** at any time.
- The answers you provide are collected under **BC's Privacy Act**.
- Results will contribute to the understanding of homelessness in Vancouver, and will help with research to improve services
- Doing the interview will **not affect your use of services in any way**.

Do you consent to participating in this survey? Yes... GO TO 1 No... END

1. Have you already answered this survey today or last night?

- Yes.....END
 No.....GO TO 2
 No answer.....END

2. Do you currently have a place where you pay monthly rent?

- Yes.....GO TO 3
 No.....GO TO 3
 No answer.....GO TO 3

3. Where did you stay last night?

- OutsideGO TO 4
 In a makeshift shelter or tent.....GO TO 4
 In a vehicle.....GO TO 4
 On a boat paying moorageEND
 not paying moorage ...GO TO 4
 Abandoned/vacant building.....GO TO 4

3. Continued:

- Detox (Facility name: _____).....GO TO 4
 Shelter (Shelter name: _____)GO TO 4
 Safe house/transition house.....GO TO 4
 Hospital (Facility name: _____).....GO TO 4
 Jail/prison (Facility name: _____) ...GO TO 4
 Recovery house.....END
 Someone else's place..... GO TO 4
 Own place inside where you pay rent
Specify: _____END
 Other: Specify: _____GO TO 4
 Parent or Guardian's Place
 I can stay as long as I want: **END**
 This is a temporary situation and I have a house or apartment I can safely return to...**END**
 This is a temporary situation and I do not have a house or apartment I can safely return to.. GO TO 4
 No answer.....END

SURVEY QUESTIONS– CONTINUES ON REVERSE

4. How long have you been without a place of your own?

____ Days ____ Weeks ____ Months ____ Years

5. What is your age or year of birth?

____ Age / ____ Year

6. What is your gender identity?

- Man
 Non-binary
 Woman
 Don't know / No answer

7. Do you identify as someone with trans experience (meaning your gender identity is different than how you were born)?

- Yes
 No
 Don't know / No answer

8. Do you identify as Indigenous/Aboriginal? This includes First Nations, Métis, Inuit, with or without status.

- Yes – please specify (check one)
 First Nations _____ (specify).. GO TO 10
 Inuit..... GO TO 10
 Métis..... GO TO 10
 Not listed (please specify) _____ GO TO 10
 No..... GO TO 9
 Don't know / No answer..... GO TO 9

FLIP OVER TO CONTINUE



HOMELESS COUNT 2019 UNSHeltered SURVEY

9. How do you describe your race or ethnic identity? Check all that apply:

- Aboriginal or Indigenous (i.e., First Nations, Native, Indian, Métis, Inuit)
- Arab
- Asian – East (e.g., Chinese, Korean, Japanese, etc.)
- Asian – South-East (e.g., Vietnamese, Cambodian, Malaysian, Laotian, etc.)
- Asian – South (e.g., East Indian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan, etc.)
- West Asian (e.g., Iranian, Afghan, etc.)
- Black – Caribbean and Latin America (e.g., Jamaican, Trinidadian, Honduran)
- Black – African (e.g., Ethiopian, Somali, Nigerian)
- Black-Canadian/American
- Filipino
- Hispanic or Latin American
- White (e.g., European-Canadian)
- Other (specify) _____
- Don't know / No answer

10. If answered "YES" to Q2: You said you have a place where you pay rent. Why did you not stay there last night? (Check all that apply)

- Did not feel safe
- Place in disrepair; not maintained
- I was out last night, but normally stay at my own place
- Other _____
- Don't know / No answer

11. If you did NOT stay in a shelter last night, what is the MAIN reason why? (Check only ONE).

- Able to stay with a friend (specify) _____
- Dislike (reason) _____
- Don't feel safe (reason) _____
- Turned away (reason) _____
- Bedbugs/pests (specify) _____
- Stayed in safe house/transition house/hospital/jail/detox
- Other (specify): _____
- Don't know / No answer

12. Have you stayed in a shelter in the last 12 months?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know / No answer

13. How long have you lived in Vancouver?

____ Days ____ Weeks ____ Months ____ Years [GO TO 14]

- Always lived here [GO TO 15]
- I do not live in Vancouver. I live in _____ [GO TO 15]

14. Where were you living before living in Vancouver?

15. Do you identify as straight (heterosexual)?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know / No answer

16. Do you have the following health concerns? (Read list) (Check all that apply)

	YES	NO	NO ANSWER
Medical Condition /Illness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Physical Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mental Health Issue	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Addiction Issue	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If yes to addiction, and willing to specify, check all substances that apply: (show list)

- Alcohol
- Cigarettes
- Marijuana
- Cocaine
- Methamphetamine
- Opioids
- Other _____

17. What are your sources of income? (Check all that apply)

- Welfare / Income Assistance
- Disability Benefit
- Old Age Security / Guaranteed Income Supplement
- CPP or other pension
- Employment Insurance
- Employment / job full-time
- Employment / job part-time or casual
- Vending
- Binning / bottles
- Honoraria
- Other (specify _____)
- Panhandling
- Youth agreement
- No Income
- Don't know / No answer

18. Have you ever had any service in the Canadian Forces? (Includes army, navy, air force, RCMP)

- Yes
- No
- Other Armed Forces (e.g. US)
- Don't know / No answer

END OF SURVEY - THANK YOU!



Survey ID:

HOMELESS COUNT 2019 SHELTERED SURVEY

INTERVIEWER NAME: _____
SHELTER/FACILITY NAME: _____

START HERE: SCREENING QUESTIONS

- Participation is **voluntary** and your **name will not be recorded**.
- You can choose to **skip any question** or to **stop the interview** at any time.
- The answers you provide are collected under **BC's Privacy Act**.
- Results will contribute to the understanding of homelessness in Vancouver, and will help with research to improve services
- Doing the interview will **not affect your use of services in any way**.

Do you consent to participating in this survey? Yes... GO TO 1 No... END

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>1. Will you be sleeping in this shelter tonight?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes [GO TO 2] <input type="checkbox"/> No [END] <input type="checkbox"/> No Answer [END]</p> | <p>3. Do you currently have a place where you pay monthly rent?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes.....GO TO 4</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No.....GO TO 4</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No answer.....GO TO 4</p> |
| <p>2. Have you already completed a shelter survey tonight?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes [END] <input type="checkbox"/> No [GO TO 3] <input type="checkbox"/> No Answer [END]</p> | |

SURVEY QUESTIONS – CONTINUES ON REVERSE

4. How long have you been without a place of your own?
_____ Days _____ Weeks _____ Months _____ Years

5. What is your age or year of birth?
_____ Age / _____ Year

6. What is your gender identity?

Man

Non-Binary

Woman

No answer

7. Do you identify as someone with trans experience (meaning your gender is different than how you were born)?

Yes

No

No answer

8. Do you identify as Indigenous/Aboriginal? This includes First Nations, Métis, Inuit, with or without status.

Yes – please specify (check one)

First Nations _____ (specify) GO TO 10

Inuit..... GO TO 10

Métis..... GO TO 10

Not listed (please specify) _____ . GO TO 10

No..... GO TO 9

Don't know / No answer..... GO TO 9

9. How do you describe your race or ethnic identity? Check all that apply:

- Aboriginal or Indigenous (i.e., First Nations, Native, Indian, Métis, Inuit)
- Arab
- Asian – East (e.g., Chinese, Korean, Japanese, etc.)
- Asian – South-East (e.g., Vietnamese, Cambodian, Malaysian, Laotian, etc.)
- Asian – South (e.g., East Indian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan, etc.)
- West Asian (e.g., Iranian, Afghan, etc.)
- Black – Caribbean and Latin America (e.g., Jamaican, Trinidadian, Honduran)
- Black – African (e.g., Ethiopian, Somali, Nigerian)
- Black-Canadian/American
- Filipino
- Hispanic or Latin American
- White (e.g., European-Canadian)
- Other (specify) _____
- Don't know / No answer

10. If answered "YES" to Q3: You said you have a place where you pay rent. Why did you not stay there last night? (Check all that apply)

- Did not feel safe
- Place in disrepair; not maintained
- I was out last night, but normally stay at my own place
- Other _____
- Don't know
- No answer

FLIP OVER TO CONTINUE

11. How long have you lived in the city of Vancouver?

___ Days ___ Weeks ___ Months ___ Years [GO TO 12]

Always lived here [GO TO 13]

I do not live in Vancouver. I live in _____ [GO TO 13]

12. Where were you living before living in Vancouver?

13. Do you identify as straight (heterosexual)?

Yes

No

Don't know / No answer

14. Do you have the following health concerns? (Read list)

(Check all that apply)

	YES	NO	NO ANSWER
Medical Condition /Illness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Physical Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mental Health Issue	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Addiction Issue	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If yes to addiction, and willing to specify, check all substances that apply: (show list)

Alcohol

Cigarettes

Marijuana

Cocaine

Methamphetamine

Opioids

Other _____

16. What are your sources of income?

(Check all that apply)

Welfare / Income Assistance

Disability Benefit

Old Age Security / Guaranteed Income Supplement

CPP or other pension

Employment Insurance

Employment / job full-time

Employment / job part-time or casual

Youth agreement

Binning / bottles

Honoraria

Panhandling

Vending

No Income

Other (specify _____)

Don't know / No answer

15. Have you ever had any service in the Canadian Forces? (Includes army, navy, air force, RCMP)

Yes

No

Other Armed Forces (e.g. US)

Don't know / No answer

END OF SURVEY – THANK YOU!

Appendix 4 | List of Participating Shelters

Shelter	Program
Directions Youth Detox	Detox
PLEA Community Services Youth Detox	Detox
Salvation Army Harbour Light Detox	Detox
Vancouver Detox (Vancouver Coastal Health)	Detox
Aboriginal Youth Safehouse (Urban Native Youth Association)	Safe House
Directions Youth Haven Safe House	Safe House
Directions Youth Safehouse	Safe House
Aboriginal Shelter (Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre Society)	Shelter
Catholic Charities Men's Hostel	Shelter
Commercial Temporary Shelter (Raincity Housing)	Shelter
Covenant House Vancouver	Shelter
Downtown Eastside Women's Centre Emergency Shelter	Shelter
Directions Youth Services Temporary Shelter	Shelter
First Baptist Church Tuesday Shelter Program	Shelter
First United Church Community Ministry Society Shelter	Shelter
Gathering Place Temporary Shelter	Shelter
Hornby Temporary Shelter (Raincity Housing)	Shelter
Lookout - Al Mitchel Place	Shelter
Lookout - Yukon Shelter Metson	Shelter
1060 Howe Temporary Shelter (Community Builders)	Shelter
New Fountain Shelter (PHS Community Services Society)	Shelter
Powell Place Women's Shelter (The Bloom Group)	Shelter
Raincity Triage Emergency Shelter	Shelter
Salvation Army Harbour Light Anchor of Hope Temporary Shelter	Shelter
Salvation Army Harbour Light Beacon	Shelter
Salvation Army Harbour Light Chapel Temporary Shelter	Shelter
Salvation Army Harbour Light Crosswalk	Shelter
Salvation Army Harbour Light Haven	Shelter
Salvation Army Harbour Light Sutherland Temporary Shelter	Shelter
Salvation Army Belkin House Emergency Shelter	Shelter
Salvation Army Belkin House, Downtown Community Court	Shelter
A Sister Space Temporary Shelter Atira Women's Resource Society	Shelter
The Bloom Group Springhouse Shelter	Shelter
Union Gospel Mission	Shelter
Vi Fineday	Shelter
Anderson Lodge Healing Centre for Women (Circle of Eagles)	Transition House
Anderson Lodge Helping Spirit Lodge	Transition House
Kate Booth House (Salvation Army)	Transition House
Vancouver Rape Relief and Women's Shelter	Transition House