

**Impacting Tennessee**

**UT Institute for Public Service  
Panel on Ending Homelessness**

**September 2021**

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**Impacting Tennessee Panel on Homelessness Panelists:**

Co-Facilitator - Elisha Hodge, UT Municipal Technical Advisory Service

Co-Facilitator – Susan Robertson, UT Institute for Public Service Administration

Chere Bradshaw, Community Alliance for the Homeless (Memphis)

Thomas Clinton, Knoxville Police Department

Rozann Downing, Jackson/West Tennessee Continuum of Care

Michael Dunthorn, City of Knoxville Office on Homelessness

Ethan Frizzell, The Salvation Army, South

Dr. Davis Patterson, UT Knoxville and Knoxville Homelessness MIS

Dr. Joe Savage, United States Interagency Council on Homelessness

Tyler Yount, Director of Special Projects for the Mayor of Chattanooga

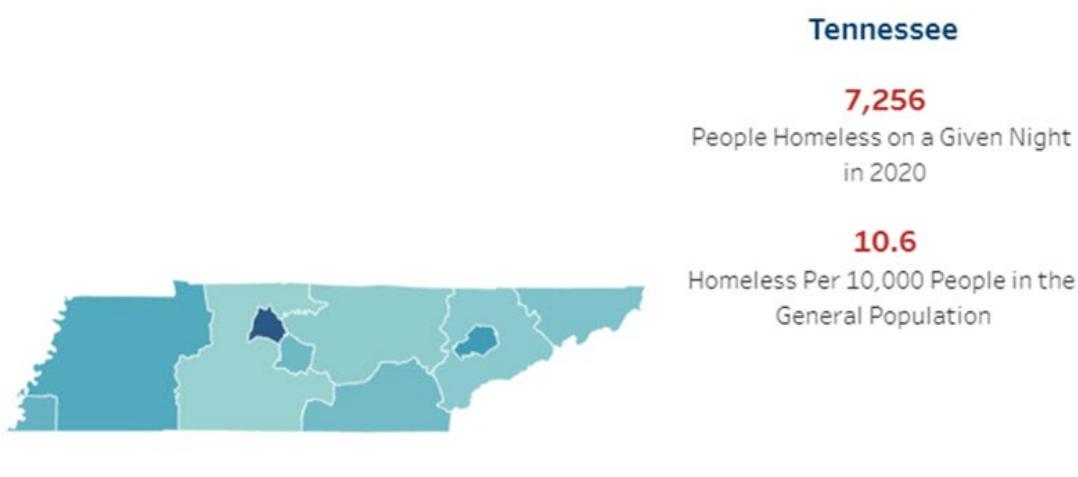
**Special Thanks**

*Special thank you to panel member Dr. Joe N. Savage, regional coordinator for the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness for many of the included resources.*

## Impacting Tennessee Panel on Homelessness

### Summary of Discussions

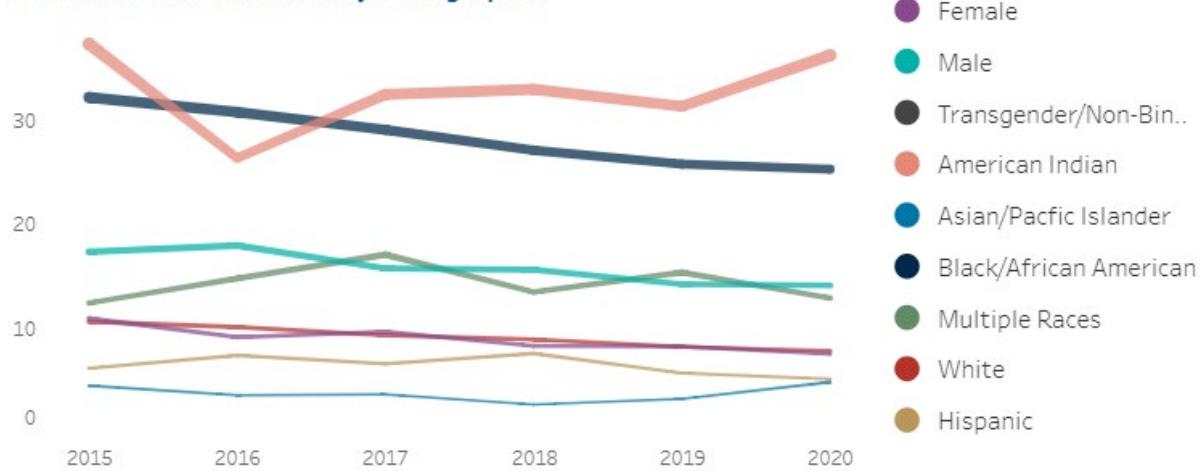
As with many States, Tennessee is no exception when it comes to increased numbers of displaced individuals and families. As of January 2020, Tennessee had an estimated 7,256 people experiencing homelessness on any given day, as reported by Continuums of Care (hereinafter “CoCs”) to the U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).



The UT Institute for Public Service (IPS) recognized homelessness as one of the more troublesome issues facing Tennessee’s communities. IPS, whose six agencies serve as resources for Tennessee’s State and local governments, businesses and law enforcement, assembled a panel of experts who recommended resources and best practices that can be utilized by customers in the area of homelessness.

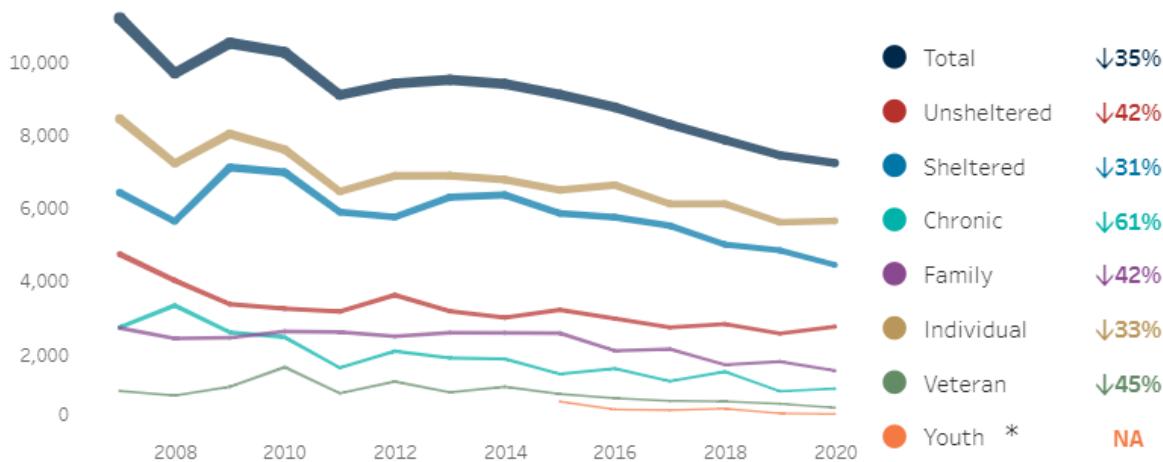
The following includes information provided by the IPS panelists as a springboard for the discussions that took place over multiple meetings:

### State Rate of Homelessness by Demographic



### State Homelessness by Population

Between 2007 and 2020, Tennessee's **Total** homeless population changed by  $\downarrow 35\%$ , the **Sheltered** population changed by  $\downarrow 31\%$ , and the **Unsheltered** population changed by  $\downarrow 42\%$ . See list for statistics on other populations.



Source: National Alliance to End Homelessness

The eight panelists assembled to address this topic work daily with the homeless population in their communities. Their tireless dedication to this issue was evident during each of the panel meetings. They identified several issues that need to be addressed to significantly reduce or eliminate homelessness in Tennessee but emphasized that the panel could not "provide a simple answer to this complex problem."

Panelists acknowledged that what is needed to significantly reduce or end homelessness in one part of the State is not always the same for other parts of the

State. While resources tend to be more readily available and accessible in the larger cities and counties, resources are still lacking across the State. Creative and innovative efforts are being undertaken across the State to create new spaces and utilize existing spaces to house those who are displaced. However, in areas where housing is available to relocate displaced neighbors, the housing is occupied quickly. Other issues identified by the panel of experts that continue to contribute to homelessness in Tennessee are:

1. low wages;
2. lack of affordable housing;
3. the reduction of mental health services;
4. drug and alcohol dependency;
5. lack of a dedicated department of homelessness at the State level;
6. lack of a State data warehouse to keep track of individuals experiencing homelessness and resources;
7. lack of partnerships between law enforcement, the philanthropic community and care providers; and
8. lack of a data mapping system at the local government level.

During the panel's meetings, the work of The Governor's Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives (hereinafter "Office") was discussed. As part of the work of the Office, a task force was assembled to study how to improve the quality of life of Tennessee by making homelessness rare, brief and non-reoccurring. Major Ethan Frizzell, Nashville Area Commander, The Salvation Army, served on the IPS panel and chaired the Tennessee Home Together Taskforce (hereinafter "Taskforce"). Other IPS panel members also served on the Task Force. Included within the appendix of this document is the report produced by the Task Force.

### **Impacting Tennessee Panel on Homelessness Recommendations**

The IPS panel recommended that the following steps be taken to significantly reduce or eliminate homelessness in Tennessee:

1. develop and maintain a Statewide data warehouse to track the number of displaced neighbors in Tennessee and better link these individuals to resources in the areas in which they reside;
2. establish a platform in the State that is accessible to those working with displaced individuals where resources, emerging issues, and legislation can be discussed; implement policy changes at the State level to address issues including, but not limited to, low wages, mental health crisis, and drug and alcohol dependency;
3. regular collaboration between the CoCs throughout Tennessee, especially related to new policy or legislative initiatives related to homelessness;

4. fund and staff a centralized department on homelessness at the State level that collects relevant data and coordinates efforts to address homelessness across the State;
5. create a resource guide that includes best practices as well as some bulleted issues that need to be addressed through policy and funding.

**As a result of the conversations that took place during the meetings with the panelist and the recommendations made, IPS provides the following compilation of resources to assist customers tackling homeless and the impact it has on employees, customers, local industry, and the community.**

## **United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) Policy, Systems, and Strategies Resource List**

The United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) is the federal government's agency responsible for coordinating the federal response to homelessness. This is accomplished through the work of USICH's Interagency Council which establishes federal policies aimed at creating a common vision and goal for preventing and ending homelessness. The work of The Council is accomplished through its nineteen (19) federal member agencies. The following is a list of USICH developed resources that seek to address some if the issues, barriers, and best practices for preventing and ending homelessness. The list is organized by homeless subpopulation and by specific stakeholder group. These and other resources along with additional information about USICH can be accessed at the USICH website: [www.usich.gov](http://www.usich.gov).

### **FOR PERSONS IN NEED OF ASSISTANCE**

For individuals or families seeking assistance, dialing the social services hotline at 2-1-1 will connect them to the necessary resources in their community. The hotline will do an assessment to determine the services for which they are eligible and make the needed referral(s).

Below are additional resources for persons facing eviction.

- [Comprehensive Step-by-Step Guide for People At-Risk of Eviction](#)
- [Tools for Renters and Landlords to Finding Emergency Rental Assistance](#)
- [Webinar: How to Help Stimulus Checks Reach People Experiencing Homelessness](#)
- [Tool to Help Families Experiencing Homelessness Claim Child Tax Credits](#)

### **VETERANS**

- [Criteria & Benchmarks for Achieving the Goal of Ending Veteran Homelessness](#)
- [Ten Strategies to End Veteran Homelessness](#)
- [Case Studies: Ending Veteran Homelessness](#)
- [Challenges & Strategies for Serving Unstably Housed Veterans in Rural Areas \(VA\)](#)
- [Breaking the Cycle of Veteran Incarceration and Homelessness: Emerging Community Practices](#)

- [Assisting Veterans Experiencing Homelessness Through VA and non-VA Programs](#)
- [Identifying and Referring Veterans Experiencing Homelessness](#)
- [Identifying and Referring Veterans Experiencing Homelessness](#)
- [Questions to Assess Whether Your Community Has Ended Veteran Homelessness](#)

## **FAMILIES**

- [Ending Family Homelessness](#)
- [Criteria & Benchmarks for Achieving the Goal of Ending Family Homelessness](#)
- [Family Connection: Building Systems to End Family Homelessness](#)
- [<https://www.usich.gov/tools-for-action/family-options-study>](#)
- [Federal Resources That Can Fund Rapid Re-Housing](#)
- [Ending Family Homelessness, Improving Outcomes for Children](#)
- [Enhancing Family Stability: A Guide for Assessing Housing Status and Coordinating with Local Homelessness Programs for TANF Agencies](#)
- [Use of TANF Funds to Serve Homeless Families and Families at Risk of Experiencing Homelessness \(HHS\)](#)
- [Tool to Help Families Experiencing Homelessness Claim Child Tax Credits](#)
- [Case Studies: Building School/Housing Partnerships for Families Experiencing Homelessness](#)
- [Building Partnerships to End Family Homelessness](#)

## **YOUTH & YOUNG ADULTS**

- [Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program \(YHDP\)](#)
- [Preventing and Ending Youth Homelessness: A Coordinated Community Response](#)
- [Federal Framework to Ending Youth Homelessness](#)
- [NCHE Brief: School Counselor Supports for College Preparation and Readiness for Students Experiencing Homelessness](#)

- [Youth Employment Toolkit \(Heartland Alliance\)](#)
- [Determine Homeless Status of Youth](#)
- [Criteria & Benchmarks for Achieving the Goal of Ending Youth Homelessness](#)
- [Rapid Re-housing for Youth Toolkit \(NAEH\)](#)
- [Coordinated Entry Brief for Youth](#)
- [Ending Youth Homelessness Guidebooks \(HUD\)](#)

## **CHRONICALLY HOMELESS INDIVIDUALS**

- [Criteria & Benchmarks for Achieving the Goal of Ending Chronic Homelessness](#)
- [Ten Strategies to End Chronic Homelessness](#)
- [Ending Long-Term Homelessness For People with Complex Needs](#)
- [Fulfilling the Dream: Aligning State Efforts to Implement Olmstead and End Chronic Homelessness](#)
- [Key Strategies for Connecting People Experiencing Homelessness to SSI/SSDI](#)
- [Medicaid and Permanent Supportive Housing for Chronically Homeless Individuals: Emerging Practices](#)
- [Ending Homelessness for People Living in Encampments: Advancing the Dialogue](#)
- [Research Brief on Chronic Homelessness \(Center for Evidence-based Solutions to Homelessness\)](#)
- [A Primer on Using Medicaid for People Experiencing Chronic Homelessness and Tenants in Permanent Supportive Housing](#)
- [Implementing Housing First in Permanent Supportive Housing](#)

## **UNSHELTERED HOMELESSNESS**

- [Tools, Policies, and Templates for Addressing Unsheltered Homelessness](#)
- [Core Elements of Effective Outreach to People Experiencing Homelessness](#)
- [Identification & Engagement](#)
- [National Partners Roll Out Resources Focused on Addressing the Crisis Needs of People with Mental Illness, Substance Use Challenges, and/or Experiencing Homelessness](#)
- [Emergency Shelter](#)

## **RESOURCES FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT**

- [Strengthening Partnerships Between Law Enforcement and Homelessness Services Systems](#)
- [Addressing the Intersections of Juvenile Justice System Involvement and Youth Homelessness \(Coalition for Juvenile Justice\)](#)
- [Searching Out Solutions: Constructive Alternatives to the Criminalization of Homelessness](#)
- [Restorative Policing: Enhancing Public Safety for All](#)
- [Ending Homelessness for People Living in Encampments: Advancing the Dialogue](#)
- [Principles of Change for Addressing the Intersections of Juvenile Justice Involvement and Youth Homelessness](#)
- [Partnering with State Police on Boston's 2020 Homeless Census](#)

## **RESOURCES FO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS/MUNICIPALITIES**

- [Mayors Can Solve Homelessness](#)
- [Mayors Continue to Lead the Charge](#)
- [U.S. Conference of Mayors: "We Need Your Help" \(Keynote\)](#)
- [Treasury, HUD, and DOJ Urge States, Localities, and Lawyers to Take Action to Prevent Evictions](#)
- [Harnessing the Power of Collective Impact to End Homelessness](#)

- [Report: What Clearing Encampments Cost Cities](#)
- [Landlord engagement](#)
- [Engaging Landlords: Risk Mitigation Funds Community Profiles](#)
- [Engaging Landlords: Community Solutions Landlord Toolkit](#)

## **RESOURCES FOR ADDRESSING ENCAMPMENTS**

- [Caution is Needed When Considering “Sanctioned Encampments” or “Safe Zones”](#)
- [Case Studies: Ending Homelessness for People Living in Encampments](#)
- [Ending Homelessness for People Living in Encampments: Advancing the Dialogue](#)
- [Report: What Clearing Encampments Cost Cities](#)

# APPENDIX

# What is a Continuum of Care?

A Continuum of Care (CoC) is a regional or local planning body that coordinates housing and services funding for homeless families and individuals. In 2007, 461 CoCs submitted application for federal homeless assistance funds in all 50 States, plus DC, Puerto Rico, and Guam. CoCs represent communities of all kinds, including major cities, suburbs and rural areas.

In 1995, the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) began to require communities to submit a single application for McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Grants in order to streamline the funding application process, encourage coordination of housing and service providers on a local level, and promote the development of Continuums of Care (CoCs). By requiring communities to submit a single application, HUD hoped to encourage a more structural and strategic approach to both housing and providing services to homeless people. A CoC would provide this more strategic system by providing homeless people with housing and services appropriate to their range of needs.

## The Four Parts of a Continuum

According to HUD, a CoC is “a community plan to organize and deliver housing and services to meet the specific needs of people who are homeless as they move to stable housing and maximize self-sufficiency. It includes action steps to end homelessness and prevent a return to homelessness.” HUD identifies four necessary parts of a continuum:

- Outreach, intake, and assessment in order to identify service and housing needs and provide a link to the appropriate level of both;
- Emergency shelter to provide an immediate and safe alternative to sleeping on the streets, especially for homeless families with children;
- Transitional housing with supportive services to allow for the development of skills that will be needed once permanently housed; and
- Permanent and permanent supportive housing to provide individuals and families with an affordable place to live with services if needed.

CoCs are tasked to can track and manage the homeless community in their area. One of most important activities entrusted to CoCs is the biannual count of the homeless population and an annual enumeration of emergency systems, transitional housing units, and beds that make up the homeless assistance systems. These counts provide an overview of the State of homelessness in a CoC, and offer the information necessary to redirect services, funding, and resources as necessary. The CoC also manages

these services, offering both prevention strategies and homeless assistance programs to assist those at-risk of or experiencing homelessness.

To learn more about CoCs in Tennessee:

<https://www.tn.gov/behavioral-health/housing/continua-of-care.html>

Source: The National Alliance to End Homelessness

# Tennessee CoCs

2020 Statistics

## Memphis/Shelby County CoC

**1,022**

People Homeless on a Given Night  
in 2020

**10.9**

Homeless Per 10,000 People in the  
General Population



## Jackson/West Tennessee CoC

**861**

People Homeless on a Given Night  
in 2020

**13.0**

Homeless Per 10,000 People in the  
General Population



**Central Tennessee CoC****517**

People Homeless on a Given Night  
in 2020

**4.2**

Homeless Per 10,000 People in the  
General Population

**Nashville-Davidson County  
CoC****2,016**

People Homeless on a Given Night  
in 2020

**29.0**

Homeless Per 10,000 People in the  
General Population



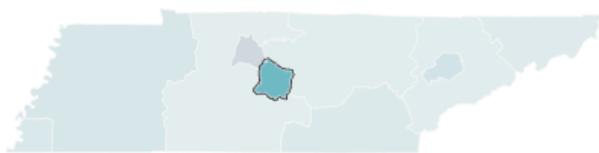
### Murfreesboro/Rutherford County CoC

**322**

People Homeless on a Given Night  
in 2020

**9.7**

Homeless Per 10,000 People in the  
General Population



### Upper Cumberland CoC

**332**

People Homeless on a Given Night  
in 2020

**5.5**

Homeless Per 10,000 People in the  
General Population



### Knoxville/Knox County CoC

**745**

People Homeless on a Given Night  
in 2020

**15.8**

Homeless Per 10,000 People in the  
General Population



### Chattanooga/Southeast Tennessee CoC

**648**

People Homeless on a Given Night  
in 2020

**9.2**

Homeless Per 10,000 People in the  
General Population



**Morristown/Blount, Sevier,  
Campbell, Cocke Counties  
CoC**

**407**

People Homeless on a Given Night  
in 2020



**6.0**

Homeless Per 10,000 People in the  
General Population



**Appalachian Regional CoC**

**386**

People Homeless on a Given Night  
in 2020



**7.5**

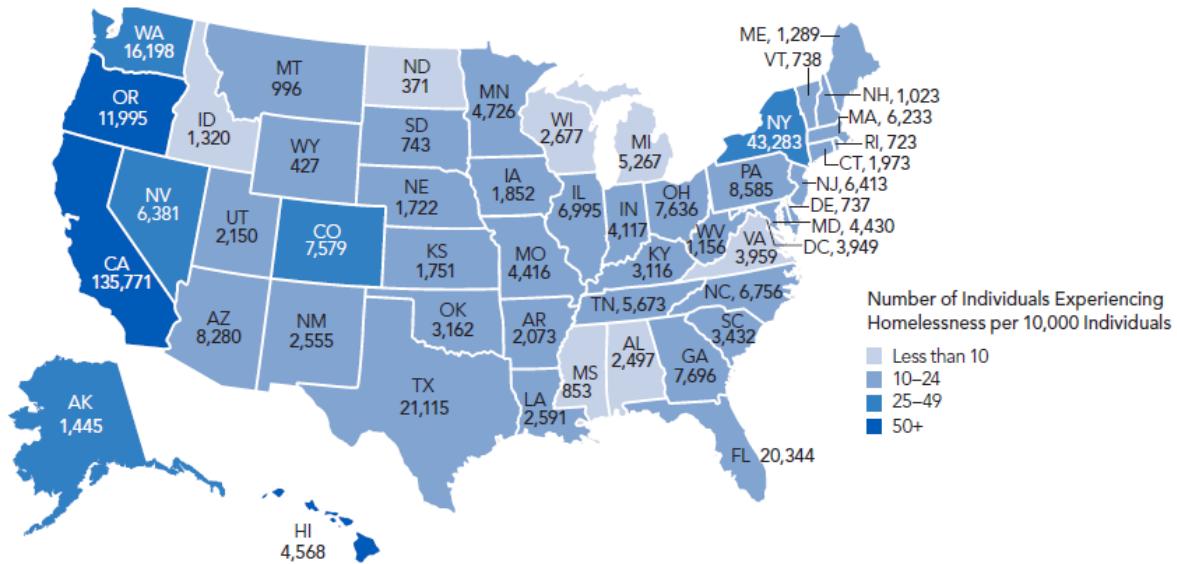
Homeless Per 10,000 People in the  
General Population



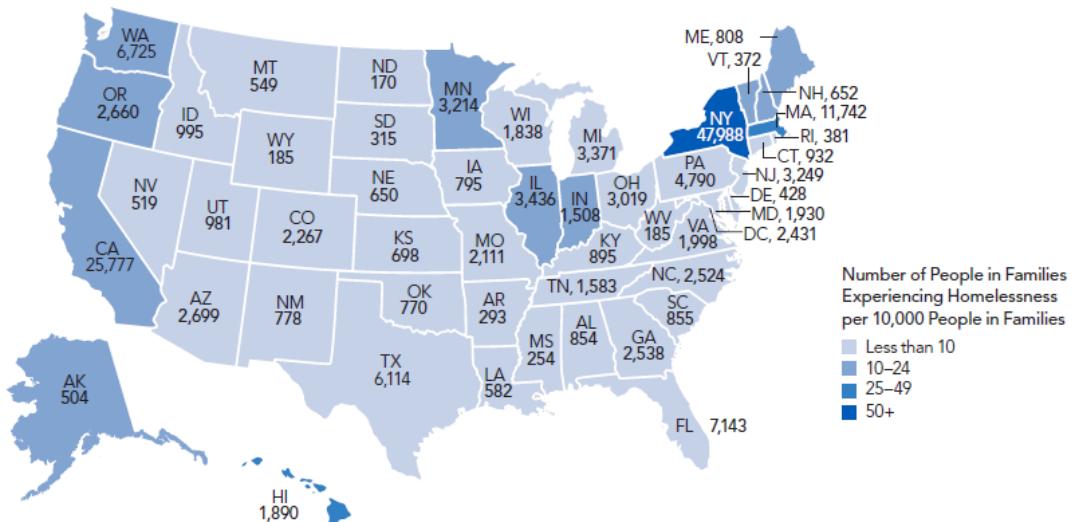
Source: National Alliance to End Homelessness

## A Nationwide Perspective on Homelessness

**EXHIBIT 2.5: Estimates of Homeless Individuals  
By State, 2020**



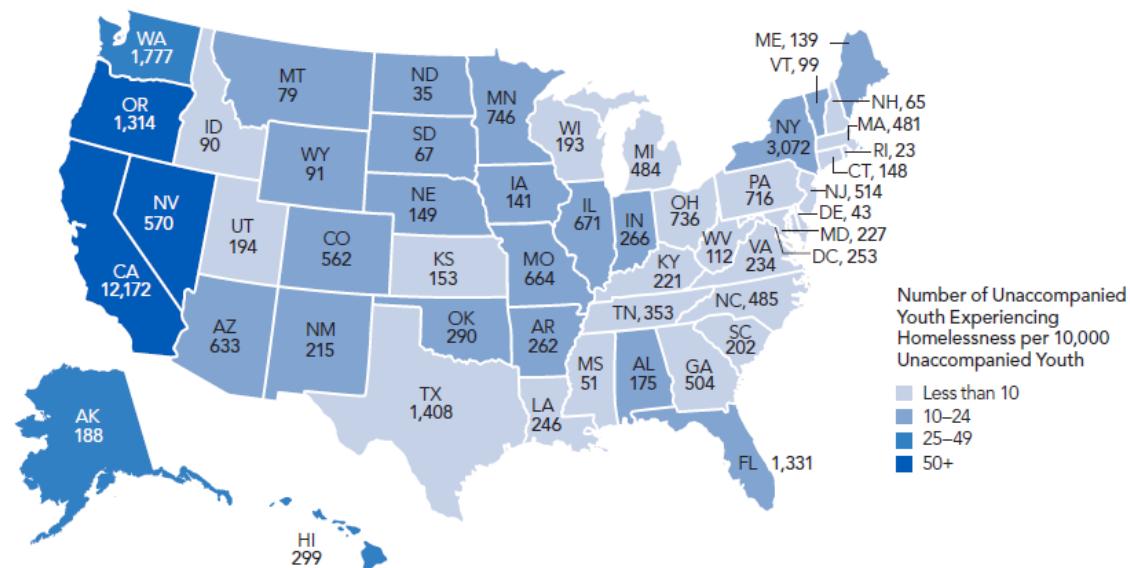
**EXHIBIT 3.5: Estimates of Family Homelessness  
By State, 2020**



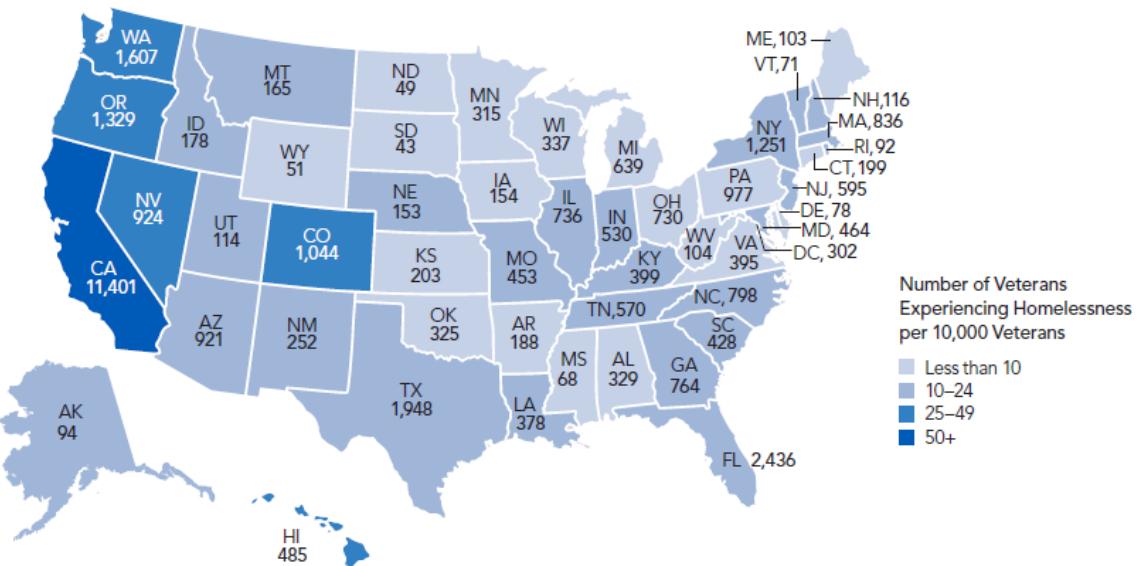
**EXHIBIT 3.6: States with the Highest and Lowest Percentages of People in Families with Children who were Unsheltered  
By State, 2020**

<b>Highest Rates</b>				
<b>OREGON</b> <b>52.8%</b> 2,660 Homeless 1,405 Unsheltered	<b>IDAHO</b> <b>48.4%</b> 995 Homeless 482 Unsheltered	<b>TENNESSEE</b> <b>29.8%</b> 1,583 Homeless 471 Unsheltered	<b>SOUTH CAROLINA</b> <b>28.9%</b> 855 Homeless 247 Unsheltered	<b>WASHINGTON</b> <b>28.0%</b> 6,725 Homeless 1,884 Unsheltered
<b>Lowest Rates</b>				
<b>DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA</b> <b>0.0%</b> 2,431 Homeless 0 Unsheltered	<b>RHODE ISLAND</b> <b>0.0%</b> 381 Homeless 0 Unsheltered	<b>WEST VIRGINIA</b> <b>0.0%</b> 185 Homeless 0 Unsheltered	<b>NORTH DAKOTA</b> <b>0.0%</b> 170 Homeless 0 Unsheltered	<b>NEW YORK</b> <b>0.0%</b> 47,988 Homeless 6 Unsheltered

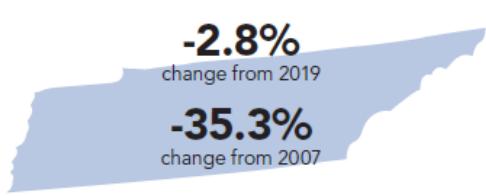
**EXHIBIT 4.5: Estimates of Unaccompanied Homeless Youth  
By State, 2020**



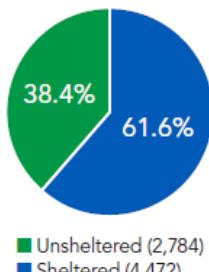
**EXHIBIT 5.5: Estimates of Homeless Veterans  
By State, 2020**



## TENNESSEE



**10.6** in every **10,000**  
people were experiencing  
homelessness



Total Homeless, 2020  
7,256

### Estimates of Homelessness

- 5,673** individuals
- 1,583** people in families with children
- 353** unaccompanied homeless youth
- 570** veterans
- 1,092** chronically homeless individuals

Source: <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/sites/default/files/pdf/2020-AHAR-Part-1.pdf>

## Local Resources and Innovative Ways Local Governments are Addressing Homelessness

Tennessee Housing Development Agency and Emergency Solutions Grants:

<https://thda.org/government-nonprofit-partners/emergency-solution-grants-esg-program>

[https://knoxvilletn.gov/government/city\\_departments\\_offices/housing\\_and\\_neighborhood\\_development/office\\_on\\_homelessness](https://knoxvilletn.gov/government/city_departments_offices/housing_and_neighborhood_development/office_on_homelessness)

<https://www.memphistn.gov/news/better-memphis-anti-poverty-plan/>

<https://www.nashville.gov/departments/social-services/homeless-impact-division>

[https://filetransfer.nashville.gov/portals/0/sitecontent/SocialServices/docs/hc/Reports/Strategic%20Community%20Plan%207.3.19\\_committee%20approved.pdf](https://filetransfer.nashville.gov/portals/0/sitecontent/SocialServices/docs/hc/Reports/Strategic%20Community%20Plan%207.3.19_committee%20approved.pdf)

Creating a Behaviorally Informed Culture of Change (A publication from the Nashville-area Salvation Army. [https://issuu.com/instigatechange/docs/lifnav\\_coaching](https://issuu.com/instigatechange/docs/lifnav_coaching)

<https://www.wrcbtv.com/story/43970775/city-of-chattanooga-partnering-with-hotels-to-house-some-experiencing-homelessness>

<https://www.wbir.com/article/news/local/emergency-housing-vouchers-available-for-those-who-need-a-place-to-call-home-in-knox-county/51-56b1cc8e-c515-4a0b-b23e-dff3eaea4b69>

## Tennessee Home Together Task Force

Through The Governor's Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, The Home Together Task Force, was established. The focus of the Task Force is "providing technical assistance and coordination in support of the collaboration between state and local government agencies, nonprofits and faith-based organizations to house healthy homeless families and senior adults in hotels, homes, condominiums and rental facilities throughout the state."

Over the course of many months, members of the Task Force met in an effort to define the issues around homelessness in Tennessee and develop action steps that could be undertaken collaboratively by faith communities, nonprofits and governmental entities to significantly reduce homelessness in Tennessee. The dedication and countless hours of work of the Task Force culminated in the report found at this link:

[https://issuu.com/instigatechange/docs/tht\\_3.1.21](https://issuu.com/instigatechange/docs/tht_3.1.21)



INSTITUTE OF LITTLE SEMINARY