



2024

Everyone Counts:

Point-In-Time Count Report

of Homelessness in Durham Region





Durham Region Land Acknowledgment

We acknowledge that The Region of Durham exists on lands that the Michi Saagiig Anishinaabeg inhabited for thousands of years prior to European colonization. These lands are the traditional and treaty territories of the Nations covered under the Williams Treaties, including the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation, Alderville First Nation, Hiawatha First Nation, Curve Lake First Nation, and the Chippewa Nations of Georgina Island, Beausoleil and Rama.

We honour, recognize, and respect Indigenous Peoples as rights holders and stewards of the lands and waters on which we have the privilege to live. In our efforts towards reconciliation, we continue to build and strengthen relationships with First Nations, as well as the large Métis communities and growing Inuit communities here in Durham. We commit to learning from Indigenous values and knowledge, building opportunities for collaboration, and recognizing that we are all connected.

The background of the page features a dark blue gradient. In the upper right corner, there are several parallel diagonal lines in a lighter shade of blue. On the left side, there is a faint, dark silhouette of a house with a chimney and two windows.

Homelessness is often the result of **systemic** or **societal barriers**, including a **lack of affordable and appropriate housing**, the individual/household's **financial, mental, cognitive, behavioural or physical challenges**, and/or **racism and discrimination.**

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Key Findings

- i. A total of 1,345 individuals experiencing homelessness were identified in Durham Region during the 2024 Point-in-Time (PiT) Count which was a 134 per cent increase as compared to October 2021.
- ii. 540 individuals participated in the survey, providing detailed insights into demographics, health conditions, income sources, and living situations which was a 63 per cent increase in survey responses from the October 2021 PiT Count.
- iii. Adults (25 to 49 years old) made up the majority (64 per cent) of the homeless population, followed by older adults aged 50 to 64 years (24 per cent), signaling a growing crisis among those in prime working years.
- iv. Survey respondents were 58.5 per cent men, 40.4 per cent women, and 0.8 per cent other genders. Additionally, 12 per cent of all respondents self-identified as Indigenous, revealing significant over representation compared to the general Indigenous population documented in Durham Region.
- v. Mental health conditions (57 per cent), substance use challenges (50 per cent), and physical mobility limitations (38 per cent) were the most common health issues reported.
- vi. 45 per cent of individuals stayed in sheltered locations such as homeless shelters or resided in Region-funded motels, and 33 per cent were in unsheltered public spaces, encampments and vehicles; Oshawa alone accounted for 52 per cent of all reported homelessness.
- vii. 55 per cent of respondents reported relying on welfare or social assistance as their primary source of income, with very few engaged in formal employment. 15 per cent of respondents reported past experience in the foster care system, underlining the need for improved support systems for youth transitioning from care.

- viii. 57 per cent of respondents had been homeless for 6 to 12 months within the past year, and over half (51 per cent) had experienced homelessness for half or more of the past three years, indicating growing rates of chronic homelessness.
- ix. 83 per cent of survey participants were experiencing homelessness alone, although families with children, partners, and pets were also identified among the homeless population.
- x. 36 per cent of respondents had lost their housing within the past year, while another 33 per cent had been without stable housing for between one and five years, reflecting both new and prolonged experiences of homelessness.
- xi. 15 per cent of respondents reported past experience in the foster care system, underlining the need for improved support systems for youth transitioning from care.
- xii. A notable proportion of individuals facing homelessness were newcomers to Canada, with 14 per cent identifying as refugees or asylum claimants, emphasizing the need for housing solutions that are inclusive of newcomers and precarious status residents.
- xiii. The data highlights urgent needs across Durham Region for expanded shelter capacity, affordable housing initiatives, and comprehensive health and support services tailored to vulnerable groups.



Definition of Homelessness

Homelessness can be defined as the situation of an individual, family or community without stable, safe, permanent, appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect, means and ability of acquiring it. It is the result of systemic or societal barriers, a lack of affordable and appropriate housing, the individual/household’s financial, mental, cognitive, behavioural, or physical challenges, and/or racism and discrimination. Most people do not choose to be homeless, and the experience is negative, unpleasant, unhealthy, unsafe, stressful, and distressing (Canadian Observatory of Homelessness [COH], 2024).

Homelessness spans a wide spectrum of housing and shelter situations, extending from the complete lack of shelter to precarious and unstable living conditions. It encompasses a diverse array of physical living circumstances, from the unsheltered to those residing in insecure or unsuitable housing (Synovec, 2020). This typology captures the varying forms of accommodation experienced by individuals without stable, permanent homes. Given that homelessness is not a singular event or state, it is essential to recognize that individuals may find themselves navigating different manifestations of homelessness at various points in time.

The different typologies of homelessness are defined below:

Table 1. Typology and Definitions of Homelessness

Typology of homelessness	Definition
Unsheltered homelessness	Refers to situations in which individuals are not regularly accessing shelters or transitional housing programs and are instead often sleeping in encampments, underpasses, in their vehicles or in other locations not meant for human habitation.
Emergency sheltered homelessness	People staying in temporary shelters such as emergency shelters, homeless shelters, or intimate partner violence shelter. These accommodations are short-term solutions, providing basic needs like food, safety, and a place to sleep.
Transitional Housing	Individuals or families who temporarily stay in transitional housing programs designed to help them regain permanent housing. These programs provide support services like job training, education, and financial counseling.
Precariously housed (or at-risk of homelessness)	Individuals who are at imminent risk of losing their housing. This includes those who may face eviction, live in overcrowded conditions, or rely on unstable or temporary living situations (e.g., couch surfing).
Hidden homelessness	Refers specifically to persons who live temporarily with others without the guarantee of continued residency or immediate prospects for accessing permanent housing.
Chronic homelessness	Chronic Homelessness is defined as an individual or family who is currently homeless and has been homeless for: a total of six months (180 days) over the past year OR recurrent experiences of homelessness over the past three years, with a cumulative duration of 18 months (546 days).

Introduction

Homelessness is an urgent and pervasive crisis affecting communities across Canada, and Durham Region is no exception. The impact of homelessness extends beyond those directly affected, influencing the overall health, safety, and well-being of the community as a whole. The issue is shaped by a complex mix of social, economic, and systemic factors, including rising housing costs, widespread economic hardship, mental health struggles, mental and physical illness, addiction, and a severe shortage of accessible shelter and service options. Furthermore, individuals experiencing homelessness are disproportionately affected by early-life trauma, which is closely linked to higher rates of mental illness, developmental delays, and disabilities. These factors significantly hinder their ability to secure and sustain stable housing over time (Klarare et al., 2024). These factors create a vicious cycle, trapping individuals in homelessness and preventing them from accessing the resources needed to break free.

In Durham, many unsheltered individuals, living on the streets or in encampments, face compounded challenges due to extreme vulnerability and a lack of basic necessities. These individuals, often dealing with mental health issues or substance use, are at heightened risk of physical harm, violence, and inadequate healthcare. The shortage of stable shelter options, combined with overcrowded emergency shelters and long wait lists for affordable housing, leaves few alternatives. The toll of homelessness on physical health is severe, leading to conditions like malnutrition, untreated illnesses, and higher injury rates. Psychosocially, homelessness fosters isolation, despair, and chronic stress, all of which contribute to long-term emotional and mental health challenges.

The strain on healthcare systems, emergency services, and social support networks is immense, as these services are increasingly burdened by the needs of homeless individuals. From emergency medical care to mental health services, these systems are stretched thin and unable to fully address the complex challenges of homelessness. The lack of stable, affordable housing exacerbates these issues, contributing to ongoing patterns of marginalization and vulnerability. As individuals struggle to find secure housing, they become more susceptible to chronic health problems, social isolation, and greater barriers to employment and education. Homelessness then, is not just a lack of shelter but it is also a condition that undermines health, dignity, and the potential for a fulfilling life.

The persistence of unsheltered homelessness and encampments in Durham Region illustrates the urgent need for comprehensive solutions that address both immediate and long-term needs. Continuously addressing homelessness is crucial not only to provide shelter, but also to offer the support and resources needed to help individuals rebuild their lives. Tackling this issue is essential for improving the physical, emotional, and psychosocial well-being of vulnerable individuals, reducing further marginalization, and easing the strain on public health and social services. As Durham Region grows and diversifies, it is vital to implement targeted, compassionate, and sustainable strategies to ensure that no one is left behind.



Point-in-Time (PiT) Count

A significant gap in addressing homelessness is the lack of consistent and comprehensive data to fully understand the extent, demographics, and service needs of those experiencing it. Inconsistent data collection across various service providers often results in incomplete or fragmented information, making it difficult to assess the true scope of the issue. Many individuals remain hidden, such as those staying with friends or family, or those avoiding shelters, leading to an underestimation of the population's size and diversity. Without accurate data, it becomes challenging to identify the unique needs of diverse groups, including youth, Indigenous peoples, and those facing mental health, physical health, or addiction challenges. This lack of data also complicates the evaluation of existing services, preventing the identification of resource gaps, and hindering the development of targeted interventions to address both immediate and long-term needs.

To bridge this gap, conducting a PiT Count can be instrumental in gathering valuable insights into the extent and nature of homelessness in the Region (Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada, 2024). The PiT Count is a coordinated data collection strategy designed to count the number of people experiencing homelessness within a 24-hour period. This process offers an estimated snapshot of homelessness in the Region, collecting data on individuals and families, as well as their service needs. It is conducted within a 24-hour window to minimize duplication and maximize cost and resource efficiency. The PiT Count began at 4 p.m. and lasts up to a 24-hour period to ensure that the data accurately reflects the homelessness situation in the area.

The PiT Count is comprised of two key components: an enumeration and a survey. The enumeration is the process of counting individuals who are experiencing homelessness during a specified 24-hour period. This includes people who are unsheltered (living on the streets, in parks, or other public spaces), those in emergency shelters, and sometimes individuals in transitional or temporary housing. The survey component involves gathering detailed demographic and service-related information from individuals experiencing homelessness. This may include questions about age, gender, ethnicity, mental health, substance use, housing history, and specific service needs, such as healthcare, shelter, or employment support. Together, the enumeration and survey provide a comprehensive snapshot of homelessness in the Region, helping to identify trends, resource gaps, and specific needs within the homeless population. This combined data is essential for guiding policy decisions, resource allocation, and the development of targeted interventions to effectively address homelessness.

A homelessness enumeration is crucial for understanding the housing and support needs of those experiencing homelessness, enabling connection to service providers. The PiT Count provides insights into the scope and characteristics of homelessness in Durham Region, aiding in planning, resource allocation, and targeted interventions. It helps secure funding for prevention and housing solutions by highlighting needs like shelter, healthcare, and social services.

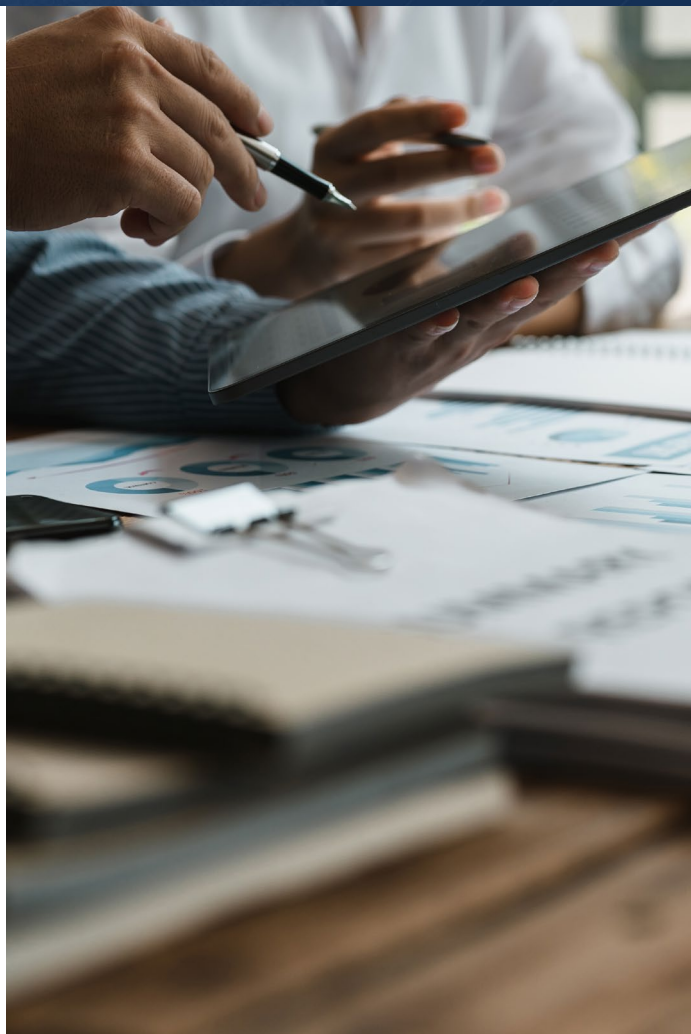
By capturing both unsheltered individuals and those in shelters, the PiT Count enhances understanding of homelessness in its various forms and improves coordination between service providers and government agencies. As such, the PiT Count for Durham Region was conducted on November 18-19, 2024, to gather a snapshot of homelessness in Durham Region, and inform local policies and services to support those experiencing homelessness.



PiT Count methodology and methods

The planning and execution of the 2024 PiT Count required a flexible, person-centered approach to maximize participation, and enhance the accuracy of the data to be collected. To support this, a PiT committee was formed, consisting of community partners from across Durham Region. Bi-weekly meetings were held to ensure alignment, gather insights, and share updates throughout the planning process (May to November 2024). These collaborative efforts, which included partnerships with internal and external outreach teams and by-law representatives, were essential in identifying “hot spots” and developing targeted routes for enumeration. By leveraging the expertise of local agencies, the approach to conducting the PiT Count was fine-tuned to ensure that the most unsheltered individuals were reached.

By fostering effective communication and coordination among all community partners, potential challenges were proactively addressed, and a comprehensive strategy was developed to ensure inclusivity and accuracy. From identifying key locations for data collection to training volunteers, every step was designed to support the goal of capturing the most accurate snapshot of homelessness in the Region. This emphasis on preparation and coordination not only facilitated smooth implementation but also reinforced a commitment to giving a voice to those most in need within the community.



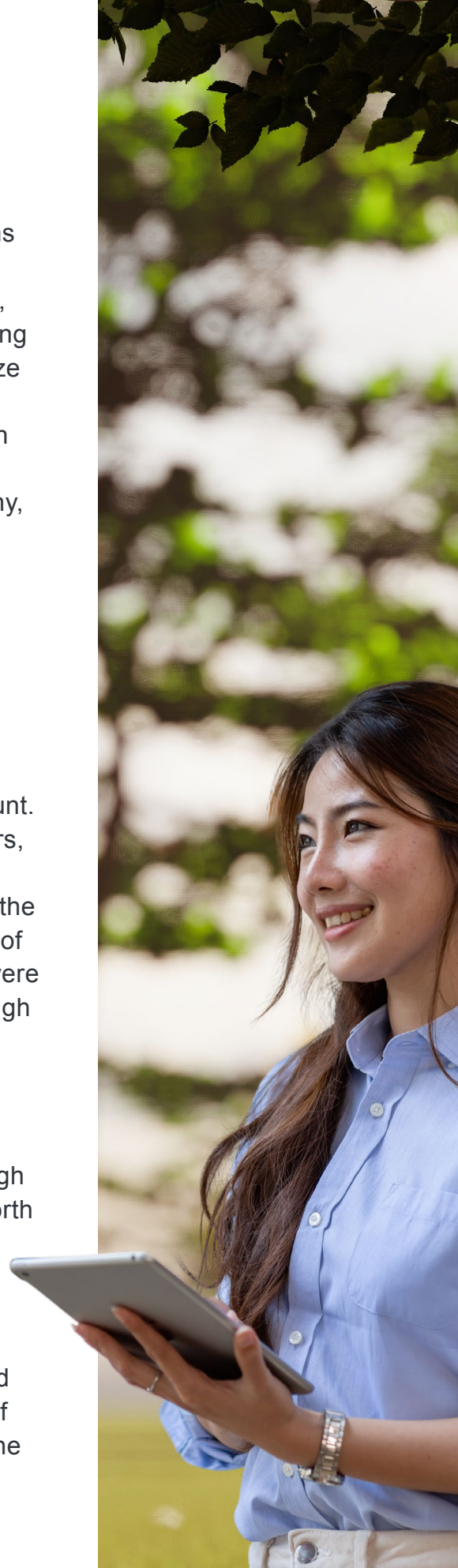
The enumeration itself remained confined to a 24-hour window with an extension for a 5-day survey window to ensure maximized data collection. While the core survey questions were standardized to ensure consistency and comparability across different PiT Counts in Canada, we received guidance from the GAP committee on how to approach and promote the surveys, what honorariums to provide, and how to build trust by clearly explaining how the data would be used. This collaborative process helped ensure that both the content and delivery of the survey were grounded in respect, transparency, and inclusion.

Data collection

To ensure the seamless data collection on the night of the count, volunteer and outreach teams were formed. These outreach teams from Durham Region, along with dedicated volunteers, played a pivotal role in administering the surveys (Appendix A). Their deep, local knowledge of the areas frequented by individuals experiencing homelessness allowed for a more accurate count, helping minimize the risk of duplication. The outreach teams, already familiar to many of those in need, had established rapport with individuals on the streets, fostering trust and facilitating the process. Volunteers were trained to approach each individual with respect and empathy, inviting them to participate in a survey aimed at gaining a deeper understanding of their unique needs and circumstances.

To affirm volunteers were well-prepared, virtual and in-person training sessions were conducted covering essential topics such as safety protocols, effective surveying techniques, and a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities during the count. This collaborative and thorough planning process laid the groundwork for a seamless and effective execution of the PiT Count. A dedicated team of 80 volunteers, comprising of outreach workers, sector professionals, college, and university students, as well as Gap Committee members, played a pivotal role in the success of the PiT Count. By harnessing the diverse expertise and perspectives of these individuals alongside our strategically planned routes, we were able to account for 365 unsheltered individuals, ensuring a thorough and comprehensive count.

It is important to highlight that dedicated teams for North Durham during the enumeration were not initially established. However, through continuous consultations with local experts, and a thorough review of available data, it became clear that homelessness in North Durham presents in a distinct manner, often in less visible ways. To ensure effective data collection in North Durham, specialized overnight outreach teams were deployed to strategic locations, such as Port Perry Hospital and known areas, where unsheltered individuals may reside in vehicles. This targeted approach allowed for a more accurate representation of the unique characteristics of homelessness in North Durham while preserving the integrity of the overall count.

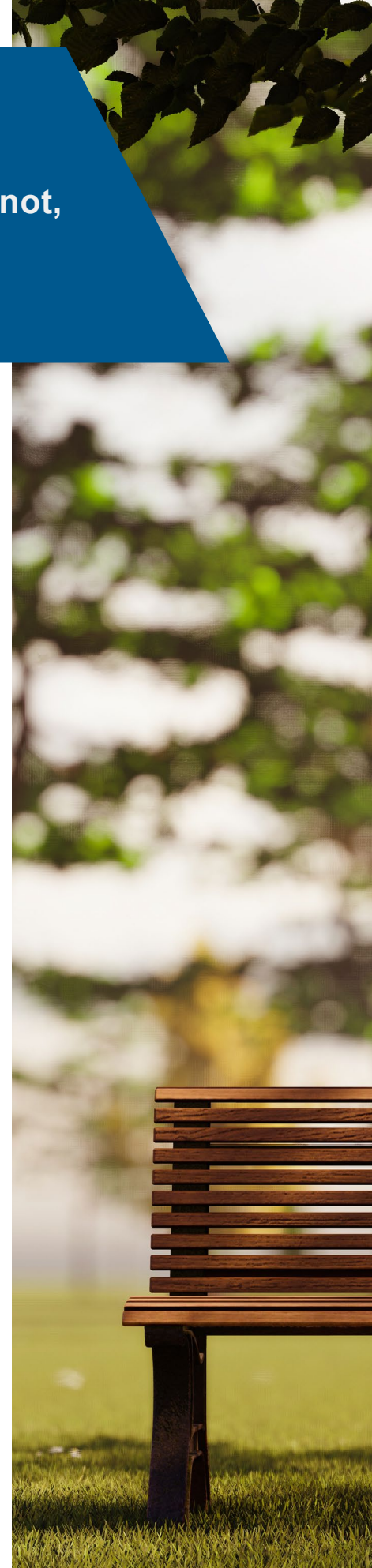


As a token of appreciation, all individuals who participated in the survey, whether completed or not, were given an honorarium.

Survey data collection by the Region of Durham and volunteer teams were conducted in a methodological manner. At the outset of the survey, screening questions were designed to assess whether participants had access to a permanent, safe residence. If a respondent confirmed such accommodations, they were promptly screened out, and the volunteer would express gratitude before concluding the interaction. Conversely, if a participant indicated that they were temporarily staying with others, additional questions were posed to determine whether their living arrangement was stable and secure, ensuring a clear understanding of their housing situation. This process also helped to identify those experiencing hidden homelessness, which are individuals who may not appear visibly homeless but endure uncertain and precarious living conditions.

During the unsheltered count, volunteers also employed unsheltered tally sheets (Appendix B) to document individuals who were homeless for several reasons, such as those seen sleeping in public spaces, those appearing intoxicated, or those who declined to participate in the survey. Volunteers meticulously recorded the reasons for non-participation, including whether a person had refused, been screened out, or was observed to be experiencing homelessness. The enumeration further captured physical signs of homelessness and the exact locations where these individuals were encountered, ensuring that every instance was carefully documented for accurate data collection.

As a result of these efforts, a more effective and comprehensive PiT Count was conducted. By reaching as many unsheltered individuals as possible while maintaining a high standard of data quality, the collaborative approach, combined with careful planning and training, proved crucial in achieving an accurate and inclusive count that truly reflects the scope of homelessness in Durham Region.





Data entry, integrity and analysis

The PiT Count survey was administered through both electronic and paper formats to ensure broad accessibility. Paper copies of the surveys were collected by Durham Region outreach teams and volunteers, who ensured their safe return to the PiT Count headquarters for data entry. The surveys were then entered into the Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS), both during and after the count, by resolute volunteer staff from Durham Region. To enhance efficiency, volunteers were encouraged to use their phones to enter survey data in real-time directly into the HIFIS database whenever possible.

In instances where surveys could not be entered into HIFIS during the night of the count, they were promptly entered into the system by the volunteer staff at a later date. Volunteers involved in the count were each provided with login credentials to access the HIFIS database, managed by the HIFIS Coordinator. Additionally, employees in the service sector who already had access to HIFIS were granted permission to enter PiT Count survey data. This collaborative approach ensured that all relevant data was captured and properly entered into the system.

At the conclusion of the PiT Count, all logins for entering data into HIFIS were promptly deactivated to maintain security and control over the database. Only the HIFIS lead had access to the data and the authority to make any necessary changes or corrections. Paper copies of the completed surveys were securely stored in a designated room at the Region of Durham, accessible only when the HIFIS lead was present, to further protect confidentiality and integrity.

A comprehensive data integrity check was conducted by the HIFIS lead, PiT Count Coordinator, and Data Analysis Coordinator to verify the accuracy and completeness of the data. Any duplicates or incomplete surveys found in HIFIS were removed to ensure the integrity of the dataset. Once the review process was complete, a definitive version of the database was exported to Microsoft Excel for further analysis, ensuring that the data would be both accurate and ready for comprehensive evaluation.

Methodological limitations

The PiT Count has several methodological limitations that must be considered when interpreting its results. One key limitation is that it does not fully capture individuals experiencing “hidden homelessness”, such as those who are couch surfing or temporarily staying in motels. These individuals, who often remain off the radar, may represent a significant portion of the homeless population in some communities. Additionally, those deliberately avoiding detection, either due to fear or stigma, find space off of high traffic areas and may have been overlooked during the count.

The PiT Count also faces challenges related to the criteria used to define homelessness and the methodology used to categorize and count individuals. Definitions of homelessness can vary across jurisdictions, leading to inconsistencies in classification. Some people living in precarious housing situations, such as overcrowded or unstable housing, may not meet traditional definitions of homelessness but still face severe instability, putting them at risk. Furthermore, the reliance on volunteer-based counts introduces variability, as different volunteers may have varying levels of experience or understanding of homelessness, leading to potential undercounting or misclassification. Marginalized groups, including individuals within the 2SLGBTQI+ community, are often underrepresented in the PiT Count due to reluctance to disclose personal information driven by past stigmatization or discrimination. Moreover, the PiT Count is conducted over a brief 24-hour period, meaning individuals who were not homeless at that specific time may be missed. As a result, the PiT Count in Durham Region, like all PiT Counts, is likely to under represent the true scope of homelessness. The findings should, therefore, be regarded as a minimum estimate of homelessness for the period of November 18 to 19, 2024, offering a snapshot of homelessness without capturing its full complexity.



Despite these limitations, the PiT Count remains a valuable tool for identifying trends, informing policy, and guiding the allocation of resources. When used alongside other data sources such as the By-Name-List (BNL) service provider records, and community engagement efforts, the PiT Count contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of homelessness across the Region. The findings from the snapshot of homelessness over a 24-hour period will help the Region to inform planning with local Municipalities, community partners and service providers to prioritize interventions, tailor supports to emerging needs, and advocate for long-term investments in housing and support systems that reflect the lived realities of people experiencing homelessness. While it only offers a snapshot in time, it can serve as a catalyst for deeper inquiry, improved data collection, and more coordinated strategies to support those in need.

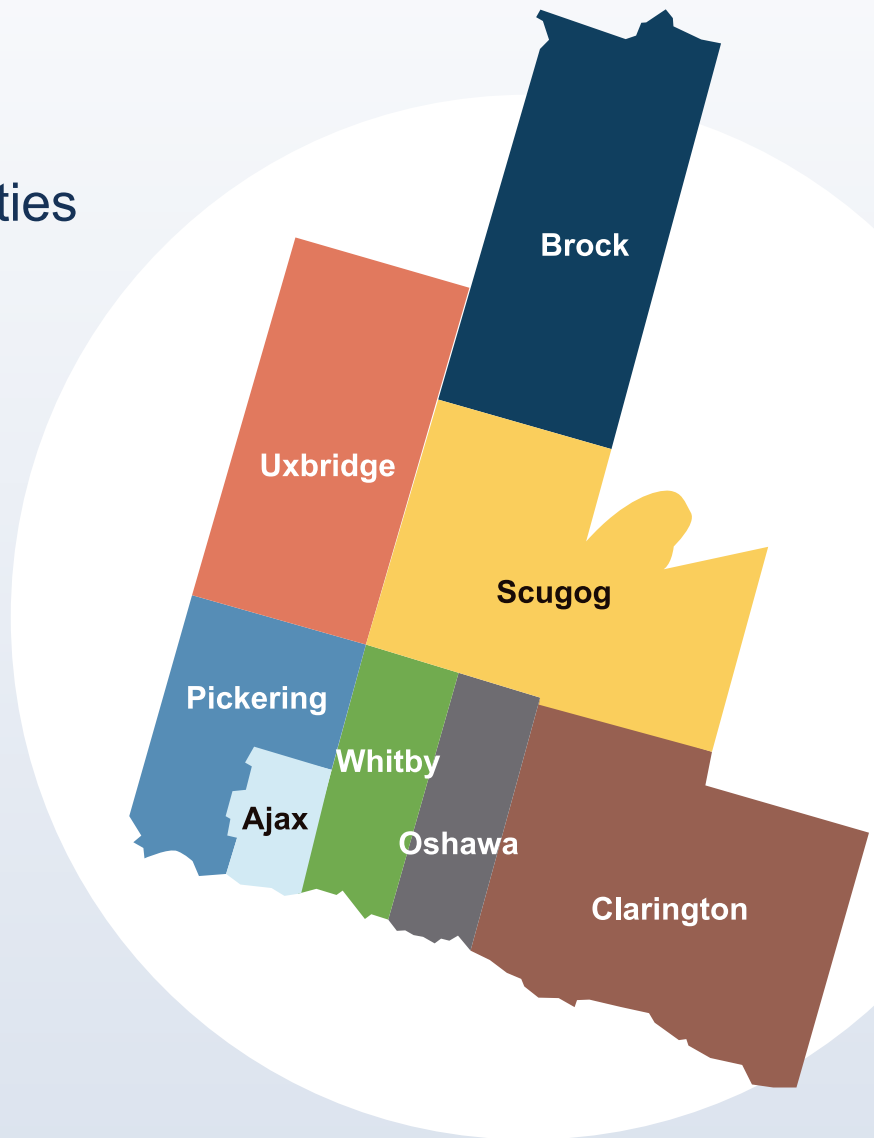


Before diving into the survey findings, the next section provides important context on homelessness in Durham Region. This background will offer insight into the broader landscape and highlight key challenges, setting the stage for a more insightful review of the 2024 PiT Count results.

Overview of Durham Region

Comprised of **eight**
local area municipalities

- **Ajax**
- **Brock**
- **Clarington**
- **Oshawa**
- **Pickering**
- **Scugog**
- **Uxbridge**
- **Whitby**



Home to approximately

753,090
residents

Has the **fastest growing**
communities compared to
Ontario (5.8 per cent) and
Canada (5.2 per cent) with a
population **growth rate of**

7.9 per cent

Context of homelessness across Durham Region

Durham Region's rapidly growing communities have seen a dramatic increase in homelessness, particularly since the onset of the pandemic. This surge is evident in the Region's BNL data, which provides a real-time snapshot of individuals experiencing homelessness who have consented to receive support. The data reveals a concerning rise in homelessness across multiple municipalities from November 2021 to November 2024. The most significant rise is observed in Ajax, which saw a staggering 719 per cent increase, growing from 21 individuals in 2021 to 172 in 2024 (Table 2). Other municipalities such as Clarington (467 per cent increase), Whitby (475 per cent increase), and Oshawa (176 per cent increase) also demonstrated substantial rises in homelessness, reflecting a broader Regional trend. Even municipalities with smaller populations, such as North Durham (Brock, Scugog, Uxbridge), saw a 60 per cent increase, underscoring the widespread nature of homelessness in the area. The increase in homelessness across the board points to systemic challenges that demand urgent attention.

Demographically, the increase in homelessness has affected all age groups, but the most significant rises have been among adults and seniors (Table 3). The adult population (aged 25 to 59) experienced a 264 per cent increase, growing from 168 individuals in 2021 to 611 in 2024. Seniors (those over 60 years old) saw an even more pronounced increase of 273 per cent, with their numbers rising from 30 to 112 over the same period. Additionally, youth (aged 16 to 24) have also been affected, with a 113 per cent increase, climbing from 40 to 85 individuals. These statistics reveal how homelessness is no longer limited to a particular age group but spans across generations, affecting the most

vulnerable members of society. The household types within the homeless population have also shifted significantly over the three-year period. The number of single individuals experiencing homelessness has surged by 278 per cent, growing from 163 in 2021 to 616 in 2024. Families, while still a smaller segment of the homeless population, also saw a substantial rise, with a 210 per cent increase, from 39 to 121 individuals. This shift in household types reflects the growing diversity of the homeless population, suggesting that the issue is no longer confined to individuals but is increasingly impacting families who struggle with housing instability.

Regarding housing status, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of unsheltered individuals, who now account for 358 individuals, a 411 per cent increase from the 70 individuals in November 2021. This rise in unsheltered homelessness indicates a growing lack of safe and stable housing options for the homeless population, forcing many individuals to live in harsh and unsafe conditions. Emergency shelter and hotel usage increased by 98 per cent, while the number of individuals couch-surfing (staying with family and friends) rose by 278 per cent. These figures reflect the continued strain on available shelter resources and the escalating need for permanent housing solutions. Furthermore, a new category of individuals was identified in November 2024. 31 individuals were placed in hospitals, recovery, or correctional facilities further illustrating the complexity of homelessness, as individuals seek temporary respite in institutions when other options are unavailable. The overall increase in these housing statuses signals a broader crisis in Durham Region that requires immediate intervention and support.

**Table 2. Comparison of homelessness rates by municipality
(BNL data: November 2021 vs. November 2024)**

Municipality	November 2021	November 2024	Difference (per cent)
Ajax	21	172	+719
Clarington	6	34	+467
North Durham (Brock, Scugog, Uxbridge)	20	32	+60
Oshawa	151	417	+176
Pickering	8	26	+225
Whitby	16	92	+475
Other/Unknown	16	35	+119



**Table 3. Comparison of demographics based on November 2021
and November 2024 data**

Demographics	November 2021	November 2024	Difference (per cent)
Age			
Youth (aged 16 to 24)	40	85	+113
Adult (aged 25 to 59)	168	611	+264
Senior (aged 60+)	30	112	+273
Household Type			
Single	163	616	+278
Family	39	121	+210
Housing Status			
Unsheltered (includes makeshift/ street, transient, vehicle, encampment/campsite, or other unsheltered housing types)	70	358	+411
Emergency shelter/hotel	123	243	+98
Hospital, recovery/treatment facility, or correctional facility	0	31	N/A
Couch-surfing / Staying with friends/family	36	136	+278
Unknown/other	9	40	344

Although the BNL data accounts for homelessness, it only provides information on those who have consented to being reported. Unfortunately, there are many more individuals experiencing homelessness in Durham Region who have not consented to be on the BNL. In 2021, Durham Region's Client Demographics Report indicated that the total number of individuals experiencing homelessness was approximately 1,050 (compared to 238 on the BNL in November 2021). Presently, data indicates approximately 2,214 individuals (compared to 808 individuals on BNL in November 2024) to be experiencing homelessness across Durham Region.

Shelter needs of Durham Region

Recent data from Statistics Canada reveals an alarming rise in income inequality, with the gap in disposable income between the top 40 per cent and bottom 40 per cent of households reaching a historic 47 percentage points in the second quarter of 2024 being the largest disparity ever recorded since data collection began in 1999. This widening gap, coupled with escalating rent and property prices, has far outpaced wage growth, making stable housing increasingly out of reach for many. In Durham Region, approximately one in 10 residents are now in core housing need, with affordability being the primary driver. A quarter of households in Durham Region spend over 30 per cent of their total income on shelter costs, further exacerbating financial instability.

Moreover, the Region's housing stock is increasingly mismatched with the needs of its population. Over 66 per cent of available housing consists of single-detached homes, which are unaffordable for low-income individuals and families. The average rent for a one-bedroom apartment in Durham is \$1,731 per month, while a two-bedroom unit averages \$2,123. Given that the living wage in Durham is \$25.05 per hour (or \$48,848 annually), many residents struggle to afford basic housing. Approximately 45,800 people in the Region live with low income, and there are substantial numbers of Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program recipients. The Durham Access to Social Housing (DASH) waitlist highlights the severity of the housing crisis, with nearly 9,000 applicants waiting for affordable housing, facing wait times of up to 6.5 years for non-priority applicants.

Despite the growing demand for affordable housing, Durham's emergency shelters are

also stretched to their limits (Table 4). Shelters across the Region are consistently operating at full capacity, with many reporting 100 per cent occupancy; availability is limited (Table 5). The influx of individuals seeking shelter has led to many being turned away, increasing vulnerability and health risks. The shortage of shelter beds also limits access to essential wraparound services, such as mental health and addiction support, employment assistance, and housing services which are vital to help individuals transition out of homelessness. These strains highlight the urgent need for more affordable housing and comprehensive support systems to address both immediate and long-term shelter needs in Durham Region.



Table 4. Durham emergency shelter system access

Category	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024 (January 1 to November 30)
Number of people who accessed shelter (including motel program)	1,318	1,431	1,446	1,427	1,434
Average length of stay	16.9 days	20.2 days	18.9 days	22.0 days	17.46 days
Average age of individuals who accessed shelter	35.8 years old	37.4 years old	38.8 years old	38.7 years old	42.3 years old
Average number of clients who stayed each night	101	139	163	181	224

Table 5. Emergency shelter system capacity in Durham Region

Organization/Location	Number of emergency shelter beds	Target population
CFOC – Ajax	47	Co-ed
Cornerstone – Oshawa	40	Male
Durham Youth Services – Ajax	10	Youth
Muslim Welfare Home – Whitby	45	Female and Children
1635 Dundas Street East – Whitby	45	Co-ed
Total	187	

It is evident that homelessness in Durham Region has become an increasingly urgent issue, particularly since the onset of the pandemic. The rapid growth, coupled with rising housing costs and economic inequality, has led to a significant rise in the number of individuals experiencing homelessness. Data shows alarming increases in homelessness across various municipalities, with areas like Ajax and Oshawa seeing some of the most drastic surges. This crisis affects a broad demographic, including youth, adults, and seniors, and is compounded by a shortage of affordable housing and limited shelter availability. The growing number of unsheltered individuals highlights the lack of safe, stable housing options, signaling the need for immediate intervention and long-term solutions to address both the housing shortage and the broader systemic issues contributing to homelessness in Durham Region.

Snapshot of PiT Count results

On the night of November 18 to 19, 2024, a total of 1,345 individuals were identified as meeting the Canadian definition of homelessness, marking a significant and sobering reflection of the escalating housing crisis in Durham Region. Of these, 540 individuals voluntarily participated in the survey, offering invaluable insight into the complex realities and systemic challenges they face daily (Figure 1). This represents a 134 per cent increase in the number of individuals enumerated and a 63 per cent increase in survey responses compared to the 2021 PiT Count (Community Development Council Durham, 2021). These numbers highlight the expanding scope of homelessness in Durham Region. However, the completion rate was higher in 2021 (58 per cent) in comparison to 2024 (40 per cent), indicating a growth in homelessness numbers but not a growth in willingness to share. Thus, it is important to continuously capture data; this will drive more informed, compassionate, and impactful responses from policymakers, service providers, and the broader community. Additionally, the dramatic rise in homelessness also demonstrates not only a growing housing affordability crisis but also the urgent need for stronger prevention strategies and wraparound supports. It suggests that current systems may be failing to catch individuals before they fall into chronic homelessness. The increased participation in the survey also reflects both greater outreach efforts and a deepening desire within the homeless community to be seen, heard, and counted.

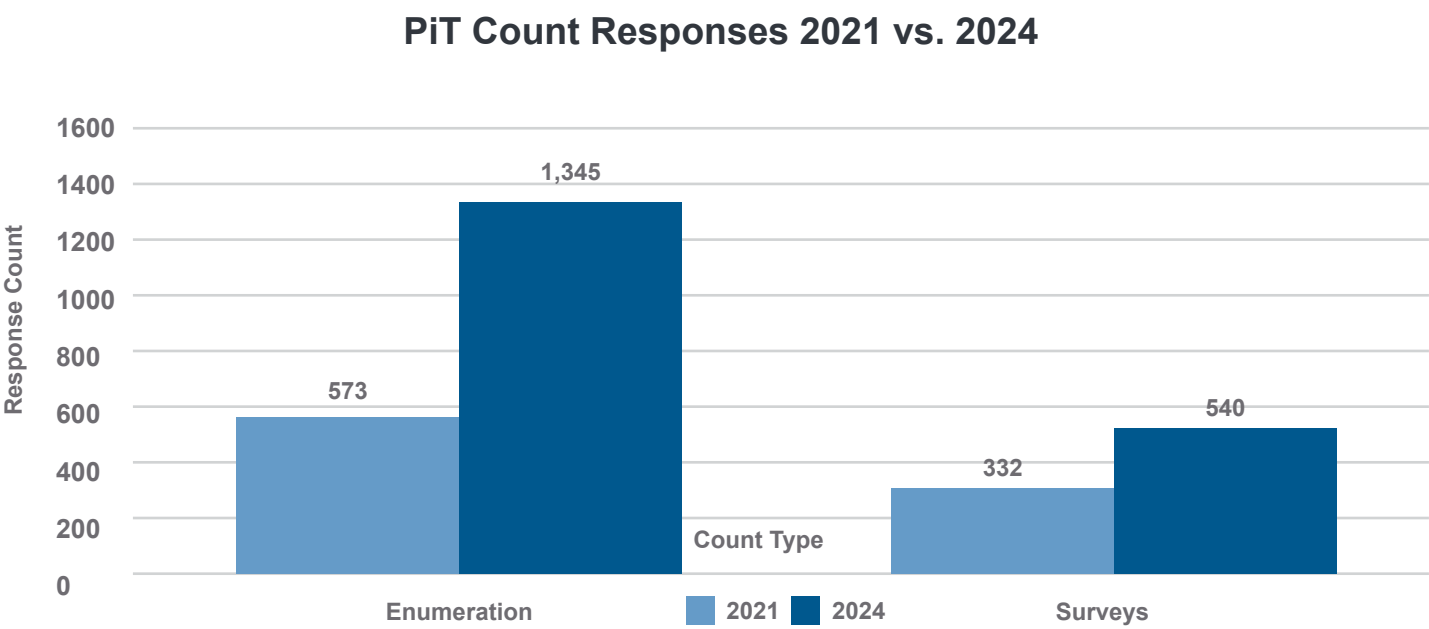


Figure 1. Comparison of PiT Count enumeration and survey responses in Durham Region, 2021 versus 2024

Survey findings

The following analysis draws from the responses of 540 participants who consented to take part in the PiT Count survey, offering a comprehensive and nuanced snapshot of the lived realities of individuals experiencing homelessness in Durham Region. These voices provide critical insights into the complex and intersecting factors that contribute to housing instability which ranges from economic hardship and health challenges to systemic barriers and gaps in social support. By illuminating the specific needs, vulnerabilities, and service gaps encountered by this population, the data plays an essential role in shaping informed, compassionate, and targeted responses for those experiencing homelessness within Durham Region. Understanding these experiences is vital for the development of effective policies, resource allocation, and the design of wraparound supports that can meaningfully address homelessness and promote long-term housing stability for these marginalized populations.

Respondent demographics profile

Age

The age distribution of survey respondents from the 2024 PiT Count across Durham Region, revealed a strong concentration among working-age adults. The majority, 63.7 per cent, were between the ages of 25 and 49, underscoring this demographic as the most prominently represented (Table 6). Older adults, aged 50 to 64, comprised 23.5 per cent of participants, while youth aged 16 to 24 accounted for 5.9 per cent. Seniors, those 65 and older, represented a smaller portion at 5.4 per cent, and 1.5 per cent of respondents declined to disclose their age. Overall, the data indicates a strong concentration of participation among working-age adults, with lower representation from both younger and older age groups.

Table 6. Age distribution, 2024

Age	Count of responses	Per cent
Adults (25-49)	344	63.7
Older adults (50 to 64)	127	23.5
Youth (16 to 24)	32	5.9
Seniors (65+)	29	5.4
Decline to answer	8	1.5
Total	540	100



Between the 2021 and 2024 Durham Region PiT Counts, significant shifts were observed in the age distribution of individuals experiencing homelessness. The most notable change was among adults aged 25 to 49, whose numbers nearly doubled, rising from 176 in 2021 to 344 in 2024, making this group the largest demographic. Older adults (50 to 64) also saw an increase, growing from 92 to 127 individuals, reflecting a rising trend of homelessness in this age range (Figure 2.). Youth aged 16 to 24, however, remained largely stable, with only a small increase from 31 to 32 individuals, suggesting limited growth in youth homelessness over the period. Similarly, seniors aged 65 and older saw a modest rise from 21 to 29 individuals, indicating a slight but steady increase in homelessness among older adults. Though different from the BNL, this could be due to the overall population surveyed on the night of the count, in comparison to those listed. Overall, the data indicated a clear shift towards a higher prevalence of middle-aged individuals facing homelessness, while the numbers of youth and seniors remained relatively unchanged. These trends reflect a broader demographic shift in the homelessness crisis, with middle-aged adults becoming more predominant.

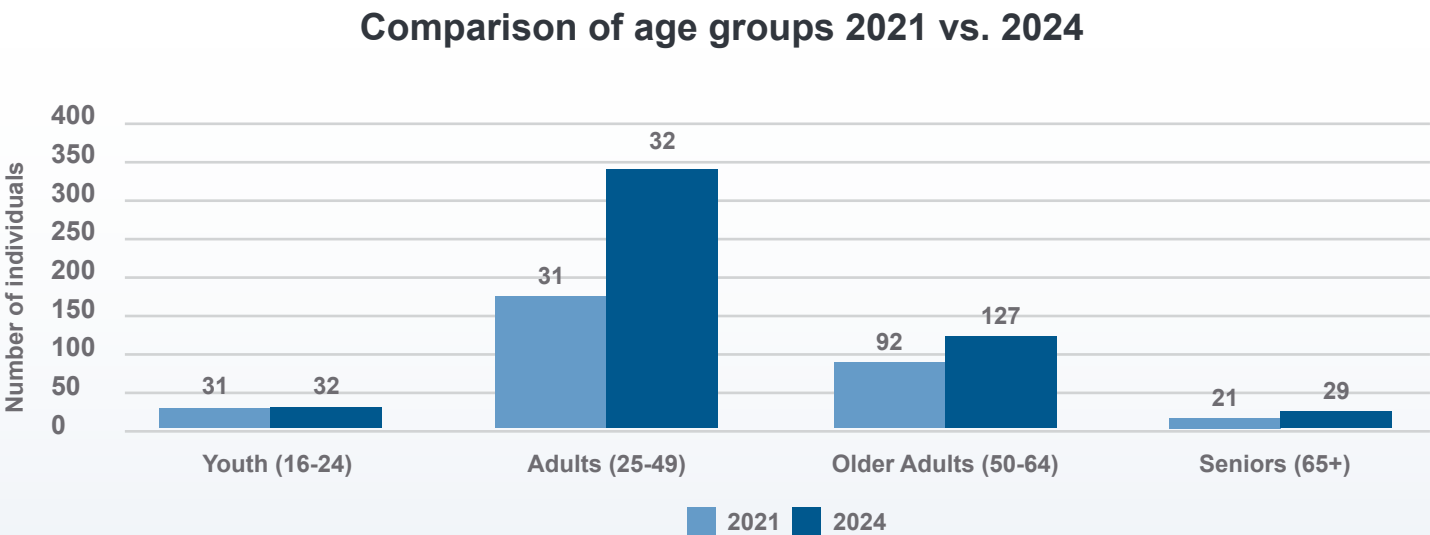


Figure 2. Age distribution of individuals experiencing homelessness in Durham Region, 2021 and 2024

Gender Identity

Of the 540 individuals who participated in the survey, the majority of individuals identified as men (58.5 per cent), followed by women (40.4 per cent). A smaller proportion identified as non-binary or gender queer (0.6 per cent) and trans women (0.2 per cent), while 0.4 per cent chose not to disclose their gender identity (Table 7). These findings illustrate a diverse range of gender identities among individuals experiencing homelessness. Furthermore, this emphasizes the need for and importance of gender-sensitive and inclusive services that recognize the unique experiences and challenges faced by people of all gender identities. The inclusion of non-binary and trans individuals in this data further emphasizes the necessity for supportive frameworks that transcend traditional gender binaries and ensure that every individual’s needs are addressed with care, respect, and dignity.



Table 7. Gender Identity Distribution, 2024

Gender	Count of responses	Per cent
Man	316	58.5
Woman	218	40.4
Non-Binary (Gender queer)	3	0.6
Trans Woman	1	0.2
Decline to answer	2	0.4
Total	540	100

When comparing 2021 and 2024 (Figure 3), there was a marked increase in the number of individuals experiencing homelessness across all reported gender identities. The number of male respondents rose from 191 to 316, while female respondents increased from 119 to 218, representing substantial growth in both categories. Although the number of individuals identifying with other gender identities saw a slight decrease from seven to four, their continued presence highlights the importance of ensuring visibility and inclusion for gender-diverse populations. These shifts not only reflect changing demographics but also reinforce the critical need for gender-responsive supports and services that acknowledge and adapt to the complex and evolving realities of those affected by homelessness across Durham Region.



Comparison of gender identity 2021 vs. 2024

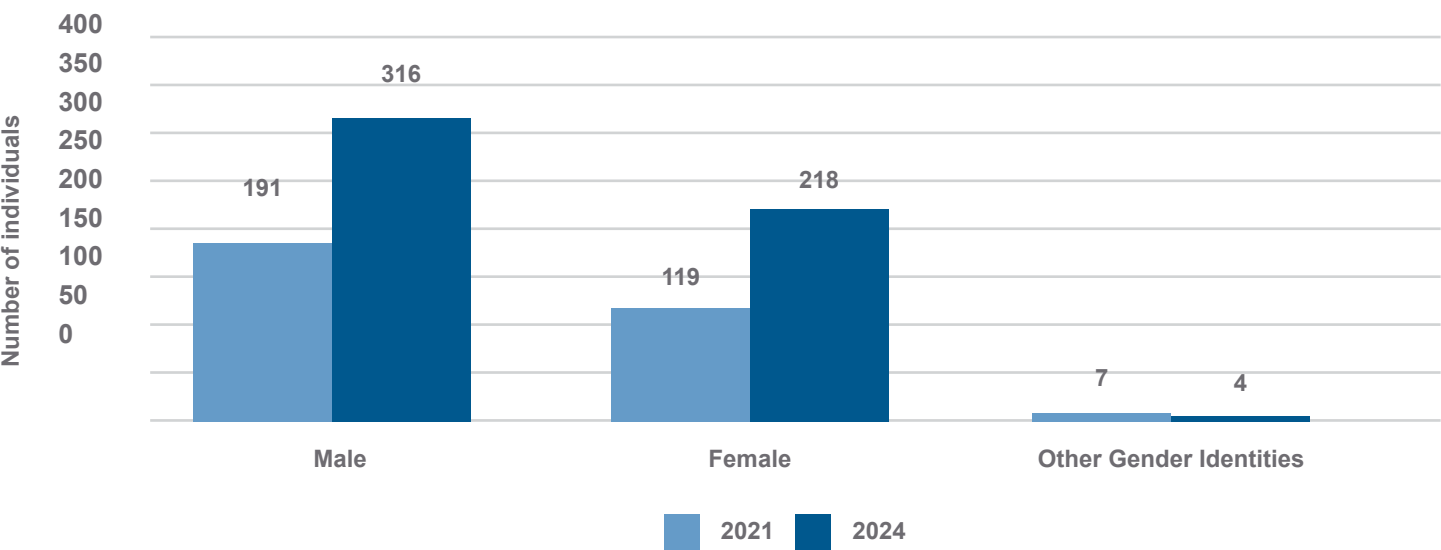


Figure 3. Gender identity comparison, 2021 and 2024

Sexual Orientation

The majority of survey respondents experiencing homelessness in Durham Region identified as straight or heterosexual (83.9 per cent), with bisexual individuals comprising the second largest group at 9.8 per cent (Table 8). Smaller, yet significant, segments of the population identified across a spectrum of sexual orientations, including lesbian (1.7 per cent), asexual (1.3 per cent), gay (0.4 per cent), pansexual (0.4 per cent), queer (0.2 per cent), and demisexual (0.2 per cent). Additionally, 0.4 per cent of respondents indicated they did not know their sexual orientation, and 1.9 per cent chose not to disclose this information. While heterosexuality remains the predominant orientation, the presence of diverse identities within the data signals the importance of recognizing and responding to the unique needs of 2SLGBTQI+ individuals.

Table 8. Sexual orientation distribution, 2024

Sexual	Count of responses	Per cent
Straight/Heterosexual	453	83.9
Bisexual	53	9.8
Lesbian	9	1.7
Asexual	7	1.3
Gay	2	0.4
Pansexual	2	0.4
Don't know	2	0.4
Demisexual	1	0.2
Queer	1	0.2
Decline to answer	10	1.9
Total	540	100



Racial Identity

When asked about racial identity, the majority of respondents experiencing homelessness identified as White (67 per cent), followed by Black African (16 per cent), and Black Afro Caribbean/Afro Latino (6 per cent), and Black Canadian (5 per cent) (Table 9). Smaller proportions identified as Black Canadian/American (5 per cent), Asian South/Indo Caribbean (2 per cent), and other racial identities (1 to 2 per cent each). 13 per cent of respondents did not disclose their racial identity.

These findings highlight the diversity of people experiencing homelessness across Durham Region and the disparities among racialized communities. This data also reveals a notable overrepresentation of Black peoples among the homeless population relative to their share of the general population in Durham Region. Thus, the data points to the importance of equity-informed approaches that acknowledge the impacts of systemic racism and ensure culturally appropriate supports are available to meet the unique needs of every person. This inclusive approach will help foster trust, reduce barriers to access and improve housing outcomes for historically marginalized populations within Durham Region.

Table 9. Racial identity distribution, 2024

Racial identity	Count of responses	Per cent
White	318	67
Black African (e.g. Ghanaian, Ethiopian, Nigerian)	77	16
Black Afro Caribbean/ Afro Latino (e.g., Jamaican, Haitian, Afro Brazilian)	29	6
Black Canadian/American	25	5
Asian South/Indo Caribbean (e.g., Indian, Sri Lankan, Indo-Guyanese, Pakistani)	9	2
Other	8	2
Latin American (e.g., Brazilian, Mexican, Chilean, Cuban)	7	1
Asian South-East (e.g., Filipino, Vietnam, Cambodian, Malaysian)	6	1
Arab (e.g, Syrian, Egyptian, Yemeni)	3	1
Asian East (e.g., Chinese, Korean, Japanese)	1	0
Did not answer	68	13

Indigenous identity

Survey responses on Indigenous identity revealed that 12 per cent of individuals self-identified as Indigenous, representing a significant portion of the population surveyed. This includes those identifying as First Nations (5 per cent), Métis (4 per cent), having Indigenous ancestry (2 per cent), and Inuit (1 per cent). Meanwhile, 85 per cent reported not having Indigenous ancestry. Additionally, smaller proportions indicated they were either unsure (2 per cent) or declined to respond (1 per cent) (Table 10). Although these numbers may appear modest, this data reveals a notable overrepresentation of Indigenous peoples among the homeless population relative to their share of the general population in Durham Region. This overrepresentation reflects the deep-rooted impacts of colonialism, intergenerational trauma, and systemic discrimination that continue to affect Indigenous communities (Department Justice of Canada, 2023). The presence of a significant non-response rate could also suggest a potential discomfort or mistrust in disclosing Indigenous identity, which illuminates the need for culturally safe and trauma-informed engagement practices (Gray et al., 2024). Understanding and addressing these disparities requires continuous collaboration with Indigenous partners and leadership. This will ensure programs and services are both inclusive and responsive to the unique needs of Indigenous peoples living in Durham Region.

Table 10. Indigenous identity distribution, 2024

Indigenous identity	Count of responses	Per cent
First Nations	28	5
Métis	21	4
Indigenous ancestry	12	2
Inuit	4	1
Not of Indigenous ancestry	458	85
Don't know	11	2
Decline to answer	6	1
Total	540	100



Indigenous identity by gender and location

When analyzing the distribution of Indigenous individuals experiencing homelessness by gender and location in Durham Region, the most common setting was being unsheltered in a public space, with 27 individuals (15 males, 12 females) (Figure 4). Homeless shelters and staying at someone else’s place followed, each with 13 individuals, showing a mix of genders including one non-binary and one who declined to answer. Smaller numbers were recorded in transitional housing, encampments, vehicles, and Region-funded hotels/motels. Notably, the data includes representation from trans and non-binary individuals, emphasizing the gender diversity within the Indigenous homeless population.

A critical insight that can be obtained from this data is the significant concentration of Indigenous individuals in informal or unstable living situations across Durham Region. Particularly, publicly unsheltered spaces inclusive of someone else’s place, encampments, or vehicles, rather than in structured environments like shelters or transitional housing. This trend can reflect not only a shortage of culturally appropriate housing options but also the systemic barriers Indigenous people may face, including intergenerational trauma, and racism. This data illuminates the continuous need for Indigenous led, culturally grounded housing solutions that prioritize both immediate safety and long-term stability. Importantly, these solutions should affirm diverse gender identities and promote environments of healing, dignity, and support for this marginalized population.

Indigenous homelessness by gender identity and location type

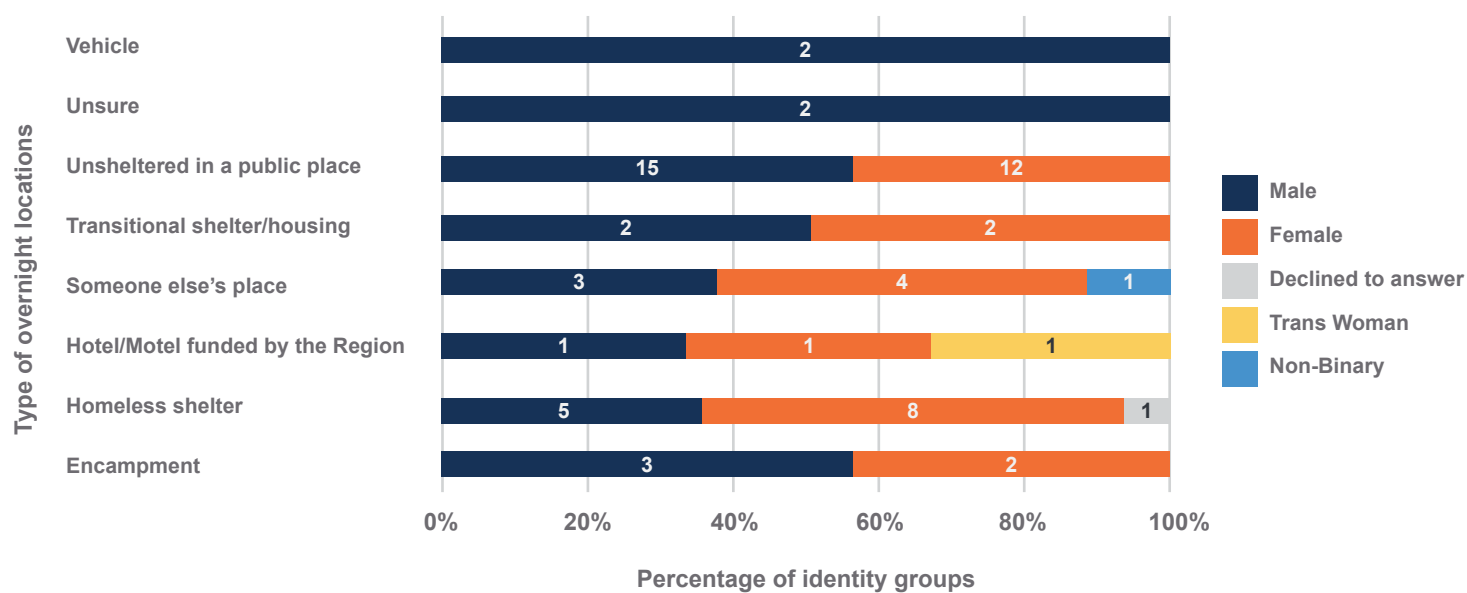


Figure 4. Indigenous homelessness by gender and identity, 2024

Veteran Status

When survey respondents were asked about veteran status, a large majority of respondents, 96.3 per cent, identified as “not a veteran” (Table 11). A small proportion of respondents, 2.2 per cent, reported being veterans from the military, while only 0.19 per cent identified as members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). Additionally, 0.93 per cent of respondents were unsure of their veteran status, and 0.37 per cent chose not to answer the question. Although these values on veterans and RCMP members are low, their representation still offers valuable insight into the presence of service backgrounds within the broader population. Even small percentages can highlight the need for inclusive policies and support systems that acknowledge the unique experiences of these individuals.

Table 11. Veteran status distribution, 2024

Veteran status	Count of responses	Per cent
RCMP	1	0.19
Military	12	2.22
Not a veteran	520	96.3
Don't know	5	0.93
Decline to answer	2	0.37
Total	540	100



Citizenship status

When survey respondents were asked about citizenship status, the majority of respondents (68.15 per cent) were Canadian citizens, while a significant portion (31.85 per cent) represented a wide range of immigration and residency backgrounds (Table 12). Notably, over 14 per cent identified as refugees or asylum claimants, underscoring the presence of individuals navigating humanitarian pathways. An additional 6.85 per cent were immigrants, while smaller percentages held temporary statuses such as study or work permits. The presence of undocumented individuals (0.19 per cent), those unsure of their status (8.15 per cent), and respondents who declined to answer (1.11 per cent) also highlights the complexity and potential vulnerability of non-citizen groups across Durham Region.

The findings from this data reiterates the importance and need for inclusive, accessible support systems that address the unique challenges faced by individuals with precarious or transitional status in Canada. From a housing perspective, many of these groups in particular, asylum seekers, refugees, and temporary residents, may face heightened barriers to secure, stable, and affordable housing due to limited income, ineligibility for subsidized housing, lack of credit history, or discrimination. Immigration status often directly impacts housing stability, where temporary or uncertain legal standing can lead to overcrowded living conditions, informal rental arrangements, or ultimately homelessness. As such, housing strategies must be intersectional, recognizing the role immigration status plays in shaping access, affordability, and long-term stability in Canada’s housing landscape.

Table 12. Citizenship status distribution, 2024

Citizenship status	Count of responses	Per cent
Refugee	41	7.59
Asylum claimant in Canada	37	6.85
Immigrant	37	6.85
Temporary resident	3	0.56
Study permit	2	0.37
Undocumented	1	0.19
Work permit	1	0.19
No	368	68.15
Don't know	44	8.15
Decline to answer	6	1.11
Total	540	100

Life circumstances and current living situation

Experience with foster care

When survey respondents were asked about their experiences with foster care, the majority (80.9 per cent) said they had not been involved with the foster care system, while 15.0 per cent reported that they had experienced foster care at some point in their life trajectory (Table 13). Even though this group is smaller, these experiences are important: young people who grow up in foster care often face bigger challenges finding stable housing later in life. Without strong support systems, they are at greater risk of becoming homeless. The small number of people who were unsure (2.4 per cent) or chose not to answer (1.7 per cent) may reflect how sensitive and personal these experiences can be. These findings highlight the importance of creating better supports for youth transitioning out of foster care to help prevent homelessness before it can begin.

Table 13. Foster care experience distribution, 2024

Foster care experience	Count of responses	Per cent
No	437	80.9
Yes	81	15.0
Don't know	13	2.4
Decline to answer	9	1.7
Total	540	100

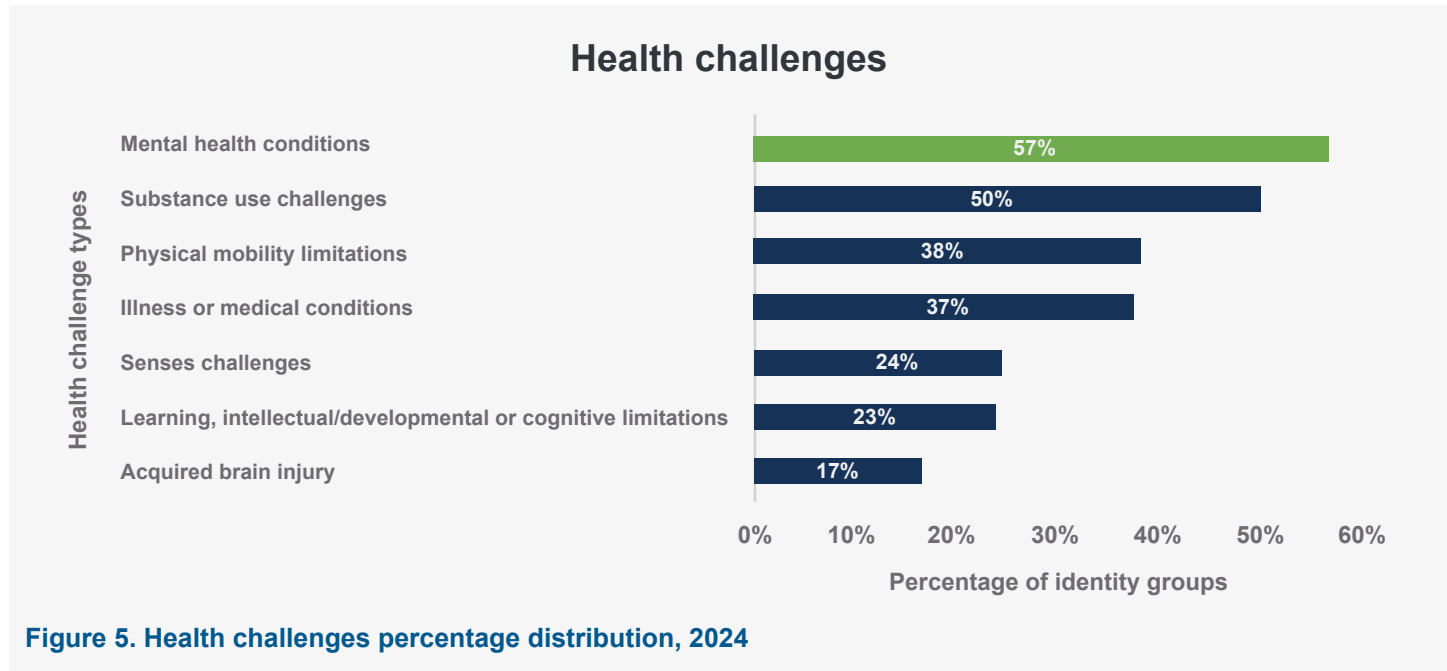


Health Challenges

Many individuals experiencing homelessness confront serious health challenges daily. When asked to identify their health-related difficulties, survey respondents provided answers, selecting all categories that applied to their experiences (Table 14). Mental health conditions were the most common health challenge, reported by 310 individuals, followed closely by substance use challenges (270 people) and physical mobility issues (207 people). Illnesses and medical conditions were also widespread (201 people). Challenges with senses, learning or cognitive abilities, and brain injuries were also significant. Figure 5 provides a percentage breakdown of survey respondents’ health challenges. This data highlights that many individuals are dealing with more than one health concern at the same time. Furthermore, these findings show that homelessness often comes with complex health needs, making it even harder for people to find and keep stable housing. Addressing health care and support services is critical to helping people move out of homelessness successfully.

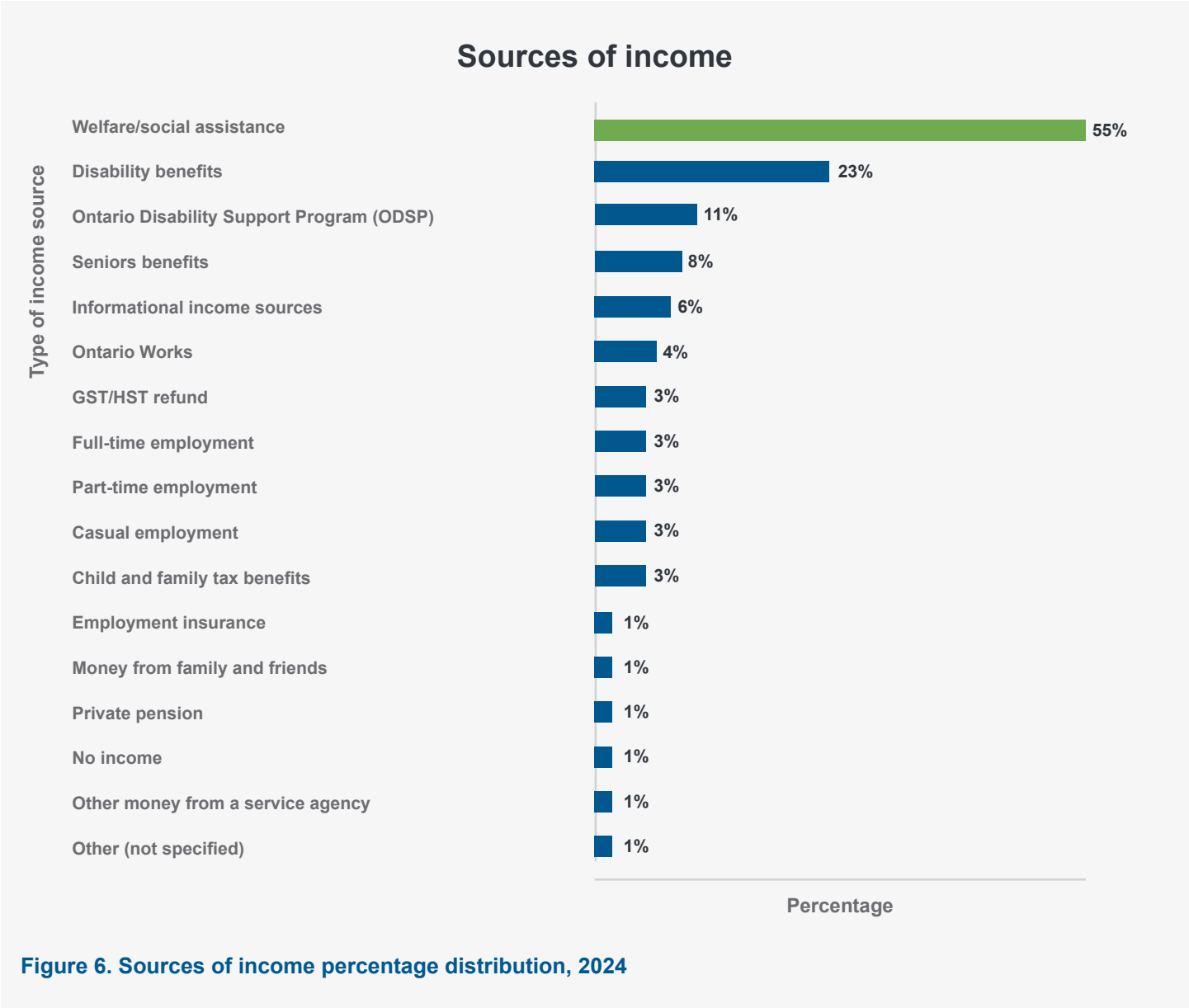
Table 14. Health challenges distribution, 2024

Health challenges	Count of responses (multi-select)
Mental health conditions	310
Substance use challenges	270
Physical mobility limitations	207
Illness or medical conditions	201
Senses challenges	132
Learning, intellectual/developmental or cognitive limitations	126
Acquired brain injury	91



Sources of income

Survey respondents were asked about their current sources of income while being homeless. The compiled findings illuminated that most people experiencing homelessness had to rely on government support, with 55 per cent receiving welfare or social assistance as their main source of income (Figure 6). 23 per cent of survey respondents obtained income through disability benefits. Few individuals also endured by relying on available resources such as seniors' benefits (8 per cent) or informal income sources (6 per cent), while a small group reported having no income at all (1 per cent). These patterns expose deep systemic issues: a safety net that provides essential but insufficient support, and structural barriers that keep people trapped in poverty without pathways to sustainable independence. This reinforces the urgent need for integrated approaches that combine income support, employment opportunities, and affordable housing solutions for those suffering with homelessness across Durham Region.

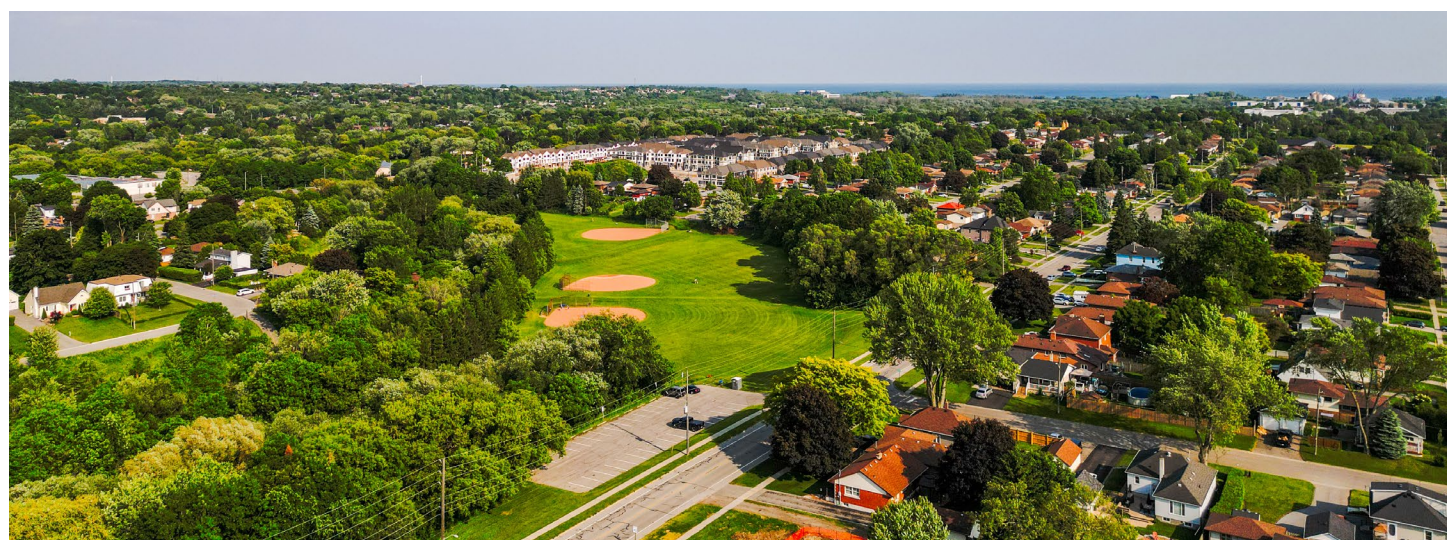


Length of time in Durham Region

The data on the length of time in Durham highlighted a diverse range of experiences among individuals experiencing homelessness in Durham, with 33.7 per cent having always lived in the area and 22.4 per cent arriving within the last year (Table 15). This can suggest that while some individuals have deep ties to Durham Region, a significant portion may be newly homeless, potentially due to recent hardships or displacement. The variation in lengths of time, from one 1 to 5 years to over 20 years, can also indicate that homelessness affects individuals at different stages, highlighting the need for tailored support strategies to address both long-term and more recent experiences of homelessness.

Table 15. Length of time in Durham distribution, 2024

Length of time in Durham	Count of responses	Per cent
Always been here	182	33.7
Less than one year	121	22.4
1 to 5 years	55	10.2
5 to 10 years	41	7.6
10 to 15 years	28	5.2
15 to 20 years	31	5.7
20+	69	12.8
Don't know	8	1.5
Decline to answer	4	0.7
Did not answer	1	0.2
Total	540	100



Overnight location

When asked about their location on the night of the count, the majority of respondents reported staying in formal homeless shelters (152 individuals) or being unsheltered in public spaces such as streets, parks, or abandoned buildings (126 individuals) (Table 16). Hotels or motels funded through Region of Durham programs served as temporary accommodation for 92 individuals, while a smaller number (27 individuals) paid for hotel stays themselves. Others found temporary refuge by staying at someone else’s place (54 individuals) or in encampments (39 individuals), highlighting the diverse and often unstable living conditions that people experiencing homelessness face. A smaller proportion stayed in transitional shelters (18), vehicles (15), or hospitals (3), with 14 respondents unsure of where they would likely be staying.

The findings highlight a complex homelessness crisis, where many individuals face risks to their safety, health, and well-being due to a lack of stable shelter. While formal shelters provide temporary relief, a significant portion remains unsheltered and exposed to the elements. Many others live in precarious situations that often go uncounted in official data, emphasizing the hidden nature of homelessness. These patterns reveal a need for long-term solutions, including affordable housing, mental health support, and prevention efforts, to address the root causes of homelessness.

Table 16. Overnight location of stay distribution, 2024

Overnight location of stay	Count of responses
Homeless shelter (e.g., emergency family or domestic violence shelter)	152
Unsheltered in a public Space (e.g., street, park, bus shelter, forest, or abandoned building)	126
Hotel/motel (funded by the Region or homeless program)	92
Someone else’s place	54
Encampment (e.g., group of tents, makeshift shelters, or other long-term settlement)	39
Hotel/motel (self-funded)	27
Transitional shelter/housing	18
Vehicle (e.g., car, van, RV, truck, boat)	15
Unsure: indicate probable location	14
Hospital	3
Total	540

Homelessness by local area municipality

When taking account for homelessness by municipality, the data revealed that homelessness in Durham Region was heavily concentrated in Oshawa, which accounted for 52.4 per cent of all reported homelessness in the Region (Table 17). Whitby and Ajax followed, representing 15.7 per cent and 14.4 per cent, respectively. Smaller municipalities like Pickering (6.3 per cent), Brock (4.1 per cent), Uxbridge (3.7 per cent), Clarington (1.9 per cent), and Scugog (1.5 per cent) reported much lower numbers, highlighting a more dispersed but still present need for support. These patterns suggest that while larger urban centres face the greatest pressures, homelessness is a Durham Region-wide challenge requiring coordinated action to ensure it can be mitigated.

Table 17. Homelessness by local area municipality distribution, 2024

Local area municipality	Count	Per cent
Oshawa	283	52.4
Whitby	85	15.7
Ajax	78	14.4
Pickering	34	6.3
Brock	22	4.1
Uxbridge	20	3.7
Clarington	10	1.9
Scugog	8	1.5
Total	540	100

Between 2021 and 2024, homelessness increased significantly across several municipalities in Durham Region (Figure 7). Oshawa saw the most dramatic rise, with the number of individuals experiencing homelessness climbing from 180 to 283 (57 per cent increase), solidifying its position as the municipality with the highest need. Whitby experienced a particularly sharp increase, jumping from 15 individuals in 2021 to 85 in 2024; Pickering and Brock also saw their numbers more than double, rising from 10 to 34 in Pickering, and 11 to 22 in Brock respectively. Meanwhile, Ajax reported a modest decline from 100 individuals to 78, making it the only municipality to show a decrease. Though a decrease can be seen, it could have been due to the number of individuals willing to surveyed during the night of the count.

These trends reveal that while homelessness continues to be concentrated in larger urban centres like Oshawa, surrounding communities are increasingly feeling the pressures as well. This highlights the broader, systemic challenges of homelessness, emphasizing the importance of comprehensive solutions that address the issue across all communities. As individuals and families seek more affordable living options outside city cores, the demand for services, housing, and infrastructure in smaller municipalities is rising. This shift highlights the need for planning and resource allocation that anticipates and supports population movement, along with coordinated strategies that consider the interconnectedness of housing markets, transportation access, and social supports across geographic boundaries.

Local area municipality comparison of homelessness 2021 vs. 2024

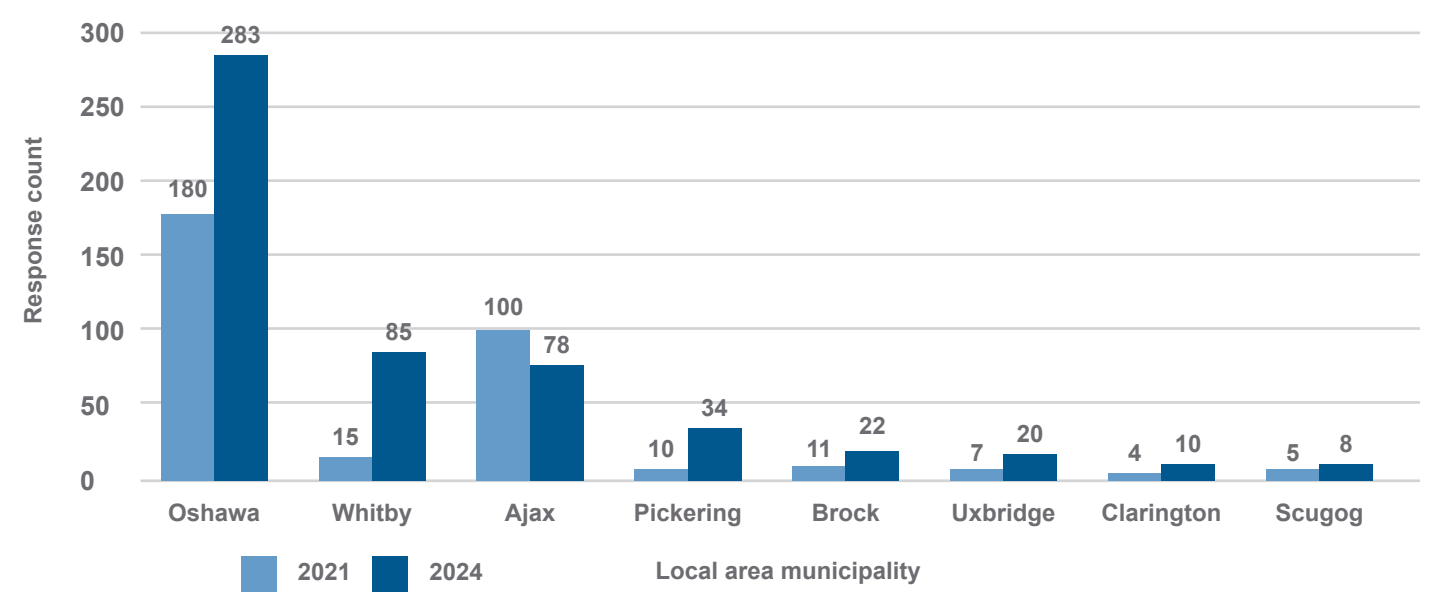
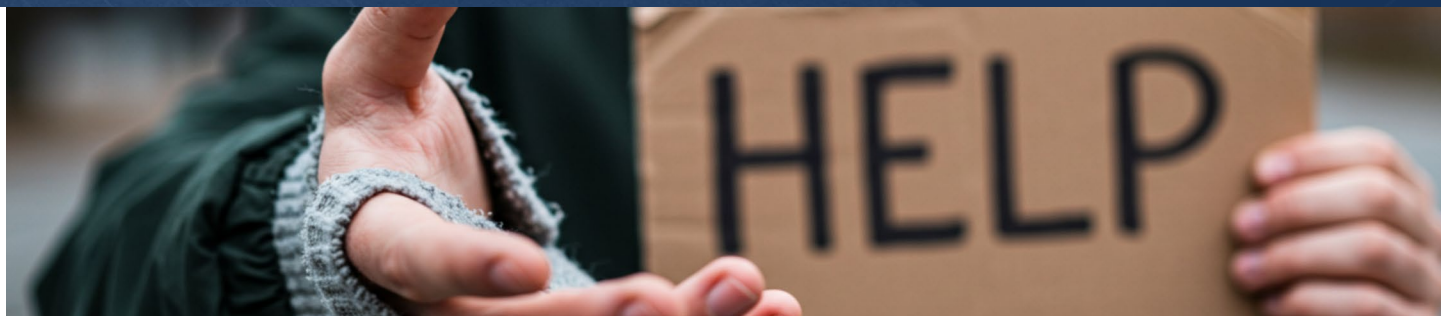


Figure 7. Local area municipality comparison of homelessness, 2021 versus 2024.



Pathways into homelessness



First time experiencing homelessness

Survey respondents were asked about their first time experiencing homelessness. The data revealed that nearly half of respondents (48.0 per cent) first experienced homelessness as adults between the ages of 25 and 49 (Table 18). Based on the data, this could suggest that economic instability, housing challenges, and life transitions during prime working years played a major role in this outcome. Another 18.1 per cent became homeless as older adults (50 to 64), highlighting growing vulnerabilities among aging populations. Although smaller in proportion, early experiences were still significant, with 1.9 per cent first becoming homeless as children (0 to 12), 7.6 per cent as young teens (13 to 15), and 15.9 per cent as youth (16 to 24), indicating that early-life instability and systemic barriers also contributed meaningfully to homelessness trajectories. The findings can indicate that while homelessness affected individuals across all stages of life, both early intervention and continued support into adulthood is critical to preventing and reducing long-term homelessness (Graziano et al., 2023).

Table 18. Age of first homelessness experience distribution, 2024

Age	Count of responses	Per cent
Child (0 to 12)	10	1.9
Teen (13 to 15)	41	7.6
Youth (16 to 24)	86	15.9
Adult (25 to 49)	259	48.0
Older Adult (50 to 64)	98	18.1
Senior (65+)	15	2.8
Don't know	22	4.1
Decline to answer	9	1.7
Total	540	100

Length of homelessness in the past year

When asked about the length of homelessness in the past one year, the data illuminated that nearly half of respondents (48.0 per cent) had experienced homelessness for 9 to 12 months, indicating that for many, homelessness had been a prolonged and persistent condition rather than a brief or transitional episode (Table 19). Shorter periods were less common, with 20.0 per cent homeless for 0 to 3 months, 18.3 per cent for 3 to 6 months, and 8.9 per cent for 6 to 9 months, suggesting that while some individuals entered homelessness recently, a large share struggled to exit it over the course of a full year, thus being considered chronically homeless. The small percentages of those who did not know (3.7 per cent) or declined to answer (1.1 per cent) may reflect uncertainty or instability in individual experiences.

Overall, the data indicated that homelessness in Durham tended to be prolonged once it began, emphasizing the urgent need for rapid intervention strategies to prevent people from becoming entrenched in long-term homelessness.

Table 19. Length of homelessness past year distribution, 2024

Length of time	Count of responses	Per cent
0 to 3 months	108	20.0
3 to 6 months	99	18.3
6 to 9 months	48	8.9
9 to 12 months	259	48.0
Don't know	20	3.7
Decline to answer	6	1.1
Total	540	100





Length of homelessness in the past three years

Findings illuminated that more than half of respondents (50.6 per cent) reported being homeless for about half or more of the past three years, highlighting the persistence and long-term nature of homelessness for many individuals in Durham Region (Table 20). Another 41.9 per cent had experienced homelessness for less than half of that time, suggesting that while some individuals had more recent or intermittent experiences, a large portion may have faced ongoing and repeated challenges. A small percentage either did not know (4.4 per cent) or chose not to answer (3.1 per cent). These findings reveal that for many, homelessness is not a brief crisis but a prolonged situation that can become deeply rooted without timely and sustained support, reinforcing the need for both immediate interventions and long-term solutions across Durham Region.

Table 20. Length of homelessness past three years distribution, 2024

Length of time	Count of responses	Per cent
About half or more	273	50.6
Less than half	226	41.9
Don't know	24	4.4
Did not answer	11	2.0
Decline to answer	6	1.1
Total	540	100

Accompaniment of homelessness

On the night of the count, an overwhelming 83 per cent (449 individuals) of survey respondents reported experiencing homelessness alone, underscoring the deeply isolating nature of homelessness for many. In contrast, 17 per cent (91 individuals) indicated that they were accompanied by family members, including partners, children, or pets. Among those experiencing homelessness with dependents, a total of 93 children were identified, with the youngest being just one year old. Notably, the most frequently reported ages among the children were 9, 10, and 12 years old, pointing to a significant presence of school-aged youth within the homeless population. Additionally, 28 individuals reported living with a partner, and 6 individuals noted the presence of a pet as part of their household while homeless. These findings highlight the diversity within the homeless population, revealing that while the majority face homelessness in solitude, a substantial number are navigating these challenges alongside loved ones, including young children and companion animals. This emphasizes the continued importance for flexible and family-centered approaches to housing and support services across Durham Region.

When compared to 2021, the data reveal a slight increase in the proportion of individuals experiencing homelessness alone; at that time, 78 per cent (260 out of 332) of respondents reported living alone, while 19 per cent (63 individuals) reported living with family members. These figures suggest a growing trend toward solitary homelessness in Durham Region, underscoring the isolation that often accompanies the experience. At the same time, the continued presence of families, including those with children and pets, highlights the diverse and complex realities of homelessness which requires a range of tailored supports to address the unique needs of both individuals and family units.

Length of time since housing loss

On the night of the count, an overwhelming 83 per cent (449 individuals) of survey respondents reported experiencing homelessness alone, underscoring the deeply isolating nature of homelessness for many. In contrast, 17 per cent (91 individuals) indicated that they were accompanied by family members, including partners, children, or pets. Among those experiencing homelessness with dependents, a total of 93 children were identified, with the youngest being just one year old. Notably, the most frequently reported ages among the children were 9, 10, and 12 years old, pointing to a significant presence of school-aged youth within the homeless population. Additionally, 28 individuals reported living with a partner, and 6 individuals noted the presence of a pet as part of their household while homeless. These findings highlight the diversity within the homeless population, revealing that while the majority face homelessness in solitude, a substantial number are navigating these challenges alongside loved ones, including young children and companion animals. This emphasizes the continued importance for flexible and family-centered approaches to housing and support services across Durham Region.

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Table 21. Time since loss of housing Durham distribution, 2024

Length of time	Count of responses	Per cent
Less than one year	196	36.3
1 to 5 years	177	32.8
5 to 10 years	29	25.4
10+ years	11	2.0
Don't know	98	18.1
Decline to answer	28	5.2
Did not answer	1	0.2
Total	540	100



Factors contributing to housing loss

The most significant factor for loss of housing was not enough income, reported by 30 per cent of respondents, emphasizing the major impact of financial hardship on housing stability (Figure 8). Relationship issues were also prominent: 16 per cent cited problems with a spouse or partner, and 8 per cent cited issues with a parent or guardian, suggesting that disruptions in family dynamics are common triggers for housing loss. In addition, landlord-related conflicts (14 per cent) and relocation or leaving the community (12 per cent) were substantial, pointing to how external pressures and forced moves can undermine housing security.

Other contributing factors included unsafe or unfit housing conditions (10 per cent) and a variety of health-related challenges, such as physical health issues, mental health issues, and the death or departure of a family member with each reported by 5 per cent of survey respondents. Substance use, often assumed to be a leading cause, accounted for just 7 per cent, indicating that broader systemic and socioeconomic forces have a greater impact to contribute to housing loss. Building sales or renovations also contributed (5 per cent), showing how market-driven housing changes can displace individuals. Overall, these findings illustrate that economic instability, interpersonal conflict, and systemic housing conditions are the primary drivers of housing loss.

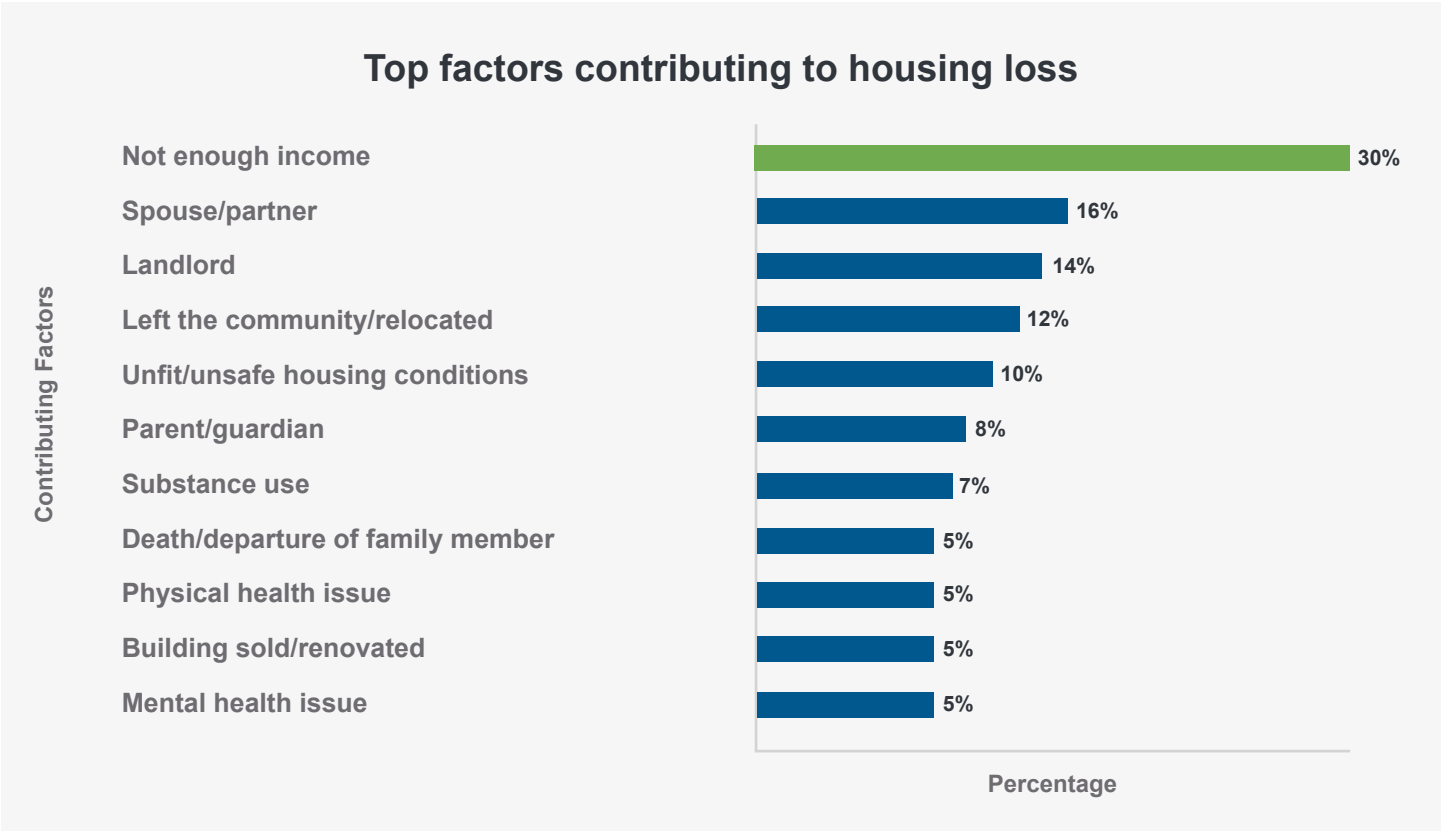
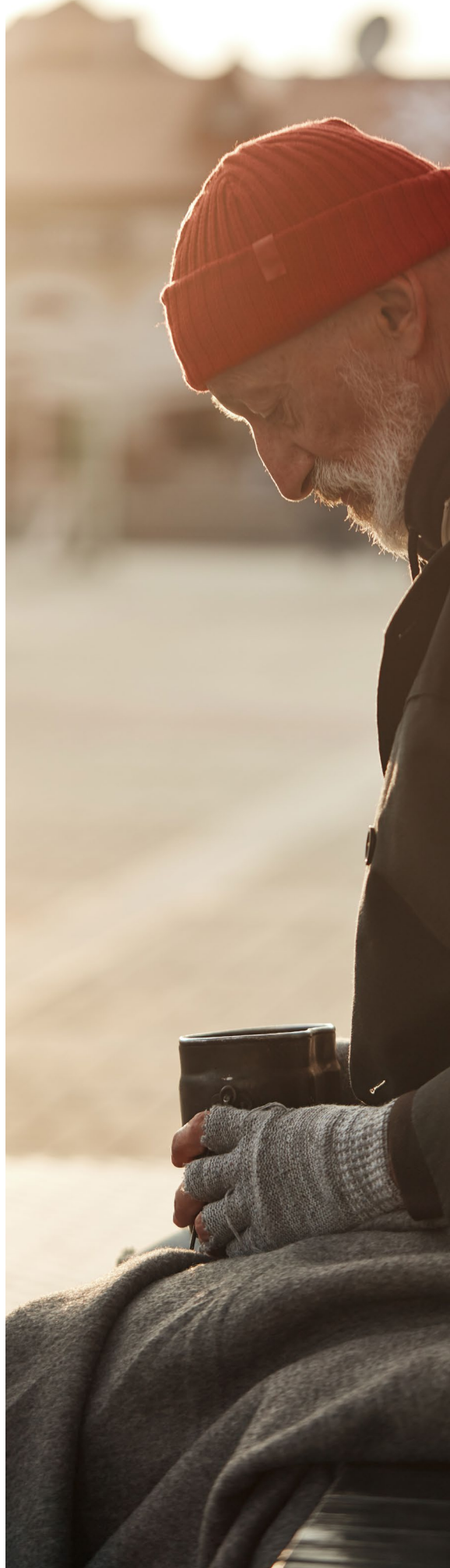


Figure 8. Housing loss factors percentage distribution, 2024

Recommendations

The 2024 PiT Count highlights a rapidly intensifying homelessness crisis in Durham Region. This increase is driven by a combination of unaffordable housing, growing income inequality, and significant gaps in healthcare, mental health and social supports. As shelters are consistently at capacity and unsheltered homelessness rises, there is an urgent need to expand emergency shelter spaces across the Region, with a focus on ensuring geographic equity. Targeted accommodations should be made available for groups with distinct needs, including families, youth, women, and 2SLGBTQI+ individuals. At the same time, long-term solutions must focus on increasing the supply of affordable and supportive housing. Deeply affordable units and permanent supportive housing with wraparound services are critical to helping individuals exit homelessness, particularly those with chronic or complex needs.

A key theme that emerged from the data is the overrepresentation of Indigenous peoples, racialized groups, and newcomers among those experiencing homelessness. While Indigenous individuals made up 12 per cent of survey respondents, they represent only about 2 to 3 per cent of the general population in Durham Region, meaning they experience homelessness at a rate four to six times higher than non-Indigenous residents (Statistics Canada, 2022). This stark disparity reflects the long-standing impacts of systemic discrimination, and intergenerational trauma that continue to affect Indigenous communities today. Addressing this overrepresentation requires the development of culturally safe, trauma-informed programs designed in partnership with Indigenous organizations and leadership. Simultaneously, mental health and substance use challenges which were reported by more than half of survey participants, demand greater investment in low-barrier, community-based supports. This includes mobile outreach, harm reduction initiatives, and integrated mental health care that can reach individuals living in precarious or unsheltered conditions. Equally important is the need to provide accessible pathways for health care, recognizing that untreated conditions often contribute to prolonged homelessness and cycles of crisis.



Youth homelessness continues to remain a pressing concern, especially for those transitioning out of the child welfare system. With 15 per cent of respondents having past experience in foster care, there is a clear need to improve support structures for youth aging out of care. Early intervention through housing supports, education access, and employment readiness can significantly reduce the risk of long-term homelessness. More broadly, economic insecurity remains a major barrier to housing stability across the population. The majority of respondents rely on welfare or social assistance, with minimal participation in formal employment. Enhancing access to income supports, job training, and living wage employment opportunities will be crucial in reducing reliance on emergency systems. These efforts must be integrated with broader poverty reduction strategies to address the structural root causes of homelessness.

Durham's homelessness is also not confined only to urban centres; while Oshawa remains the most impacted, smaller municipalities are also seeing growing numbers. This calls for stronger coordination and planning, supported by continued shared data infrastructure such as the BNL and HIFIS amongst community partners. These tools can support real-time tracking, more effective service delivery, and targeted resource allocation. Additionally, the growing number of newcomers, including refugees and asylum seekers, highlights the need for inclusive housing policies that support those with precarious immigration status. These individuals often face language barriers, limited eligibility for services, and discrimination in the housing market, further compounding their vulnerability. Supports must ensure that services are accessible and responsive to the unique needs of all residents, regardless of citizenship or status.

Finally, a strong emphasis must be placed on prevention and system level integration. With many individuals losing housing within the past year (36 per cent), timely interventions such as eviction prevention, property owner mediation, and housing retention programs are extremely important. These services can help stabilize individuals before they become chronically homeless. In tandem, cross-sector collaboration between housing, health, justice, and social service systems is essential to create sustainable, long-term change. A coordinated, person-centered approach that aligns funding, data, and service planning will ensure that efforts are both efficient and impactful. Without sustained investment and shared accountability, homelessness will continue to rise and disproportionately affect the most vulnerable members of Durham Region. These findings make it clear that the time for coordinated and compassionate action is now. It is essential that we move swiftly to make long-lasting and impactful change for those suffering through homelessness. This can ensure the opportunity to live with dignity, stability, and hope. By working together across systems and sectors, we can begin to turn the tide on homelessness and build a more inclusive, supportive Durham Region for all.



Progress in addressing homelessness

In 2024, Durham Region significantly enhanced its homelessness response system to better address growing needs across the community. The Durham Region Outreach Team increased its capacity allowing for more proactive, person-centered support and earlier intervention. The outreach team was able to offer onsite support at warming centers and daytime programming sites. This increase in service delivery helped identify individuals for the BNL, particularly in remote and underserved areas, serving as a mobile access point for services. To improve accessibility across Durham Region, especially in rural areas and Clarington, six new agencies, including Cornerstone Community Association Durham, and Community Living Durham North, were added as official BNL access points, complemented by mobile outreach through the Mental Health Outreach Program and other partners.

System coordination was further strengthened through initiatives like the Homelessness System Sector Table, which piloted streamlined BNL entries, resulting in a 200 per cent increase through Cornerstone Community Association Durham alone. This improved identification and enabled more timely housing matches: in 2024, 349 individuals, including 155 chronically homeless people, were housed through the BNL, with 289 maintaining their housing by year-end. A Youth Coordinated Access Table and partnership with A Way Home Durham positioned the Region as a leader in national youth homelessness solutions, while a Veteran Homelessness Program connected verified veterans to wraparound supports and rental supplements.

To ensure improved data integrity and informed decision-making, a business tech coordinator (HIFIS) role was created coordinating training and data collection requirements in the system. This advancement allowed for better identification of chronically homeless individuals. The 2024 PiT Count confirmed the growing urgency, showing a 134 per cent increase in individuals experiencing

homelessness since 2021. In response, 50 Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB) subsidies were provided to shelter residents, facilitating their transition into stable housing, and freeing up shelter space for individuals living outdoors or in encampments.

Durham also implemented its expanded Winter Warming Strategy across all local area municipalities, enhanced coordination by bringing the Housing Stability Program in-house, and developed a compassionate Regional Encampment Strategy in partnership with multiple municipal and emergency stakeholders. Additionally, Durham hosted its first homelessness vigil, a solemn event that honoured lives lost and highlighted the human cost of homelessness in our community. Education and public engagement became key strategies in breaking down stigma and promoting data-informed perspectives on homelessness. With presentations delivered to Regional Council, local municipalities, libraries, and community partners, and supported by a powerful social media campaign, Durham amplified voices of lived experience and deepened awareness of Coordinated Access and the BNL. A new centralized contact system, via HomelessHelp@Durham.ca, and 311 extension 5510, now offers 24/7 triaged responses, improving public access and service navigation.

Durham Region also introduced a modern, low-barrier shelter option providing 24/7 onsite services, encouraging individuals to come indoors and move along the housing continuum. Durham Region remains steadfast in its commitment to building a coordinated, accountable, and compassionate homelessness response system that meets the evolving needs of its most vulnerable residents.



Conclusion

The 2024 PiT Count helps shine a light on the current state of homelessness in Durham Region. It provides a snapshot of who is affected, where individuals are staying and the challenges they face on a daily basis. This data was gathered through the voices of people with lived experience. These perspectives continue to be essential to understanding the daily realities of homelessness and for shaping practical, informed responses that reflect what is actually happening across communities in Durham Region.

Furthermore, this count can serve as a vital tool for community organizations, local governments, and service providers to identify where needs are greatest and which types of support are most effective. It solidifies a growing demand for shelter and homelessness services to address immediate needs. This information will enable the design of services, programs, and policies that reflect the true conditions across Durham Region and address the systemic barriers contributing to homelessness.

The findings highlight tangible opportunities for positive and lasting change. The data emphasizes the urgent need to increase access to affordable housing, expand emergency shelter capacity, and strengthen mental health and addiction supports. The data also reinforces the critical connection between housing stability and access to income, health care, and social services. Addressing homelessness requires a multifaceted, person-centered approach that accounts for the complexity of each individual's

experience. The results further reinforce the importance of creating services that are inclusive, culturally appropriate, and accessible to all, particularly for Indigenous peoples, racialized communities, newcomers, youth, seniors, and 2SLGBTQI+ individuals. Services grounded in dignity, equity, and respect are more likely to be effective and widely used.

Homelessness is not only a personal hardship but a community-wide issue with broad social and economic impacts. It strains health care, education, public safety, and overall community well-being. Addressing it requires coordinated action across sectors and meaningful engagement with those who have lived experience. The 2024 PiT Count provides strong evidence to guide informed decision-making and long-term planning. With strategic investments, cross-sector collaboration, and sustained leadership, Durham Region is well-positioned to continue to strengthen its housing system and ensure that all residents have access to safe, stable housing and the supports needed to achieve long-term stability and well-being.



Acknowledgments

We sincerely thank our community partners for their invaluable support and collaboration in making the 2024 PiT Count possible. Your shared commitment, expertise, and on-the-ground presence ensured this work was rooted in compassion and equity. Your dedication highlights the power of collective action in addressing homelessness across Durham Region.

We would also like to sincerely thank the members of the PiT Count committee for their leadership, coordination, and tireless diligence. Your thoughtful planning, logistical guidance, and deep understanding of the community shaped a count that was both comprehensive and humane. Equally, we acknowledge the volunteers who braved the cold, the dark, and the emotional weight of the night count. Your willingness to listen, engage, and honour each person's story brought dignity to the data collection process and turned statistics into narratives of real human experience.



THANK YOU!

Most importantly, we recognize the 540 individuals experiencing homelessness who generously shared their time, stories, and perspectives.

Your voices form the heart of this report. In moments where trust is not easily given, you allowed us a glimpse into your lives, and for that, we are profoundly grateful. Your courage in speaking truth, despite hardship, ensures that this report reflects not only numbers, but the lived realities that demand continuous empathy and action. We carry your insights forward with responsibility and hope.



Community Partners

- 1635 Dundas Street East
- AIDS Committee of Durham Region
- All Saints' Anglican Church
- Back Door Mission for the Relief of Poverty
- Bethesda House
- Brock Community Food Bank
- Brock Township Library – Beaverton Branch
- Brock Township Library – Cannington Branch
- Brock Township Library – Sunderland Branch
- Brock Community Health Centre
- Canadian Mental Health Association
- Clarington East Food Bank
- Clarington Library, Museum & Archives
- Christian Faith Outreach Centre
- Community Development Council of Durham
- Cornerstone Community Association of Durham
- Do Unto Others
- Dedicated Advocacy Resource Support
- Durham Mental Health Services
- Durham Outlook for the Needy
- Durham Youth Services
- Herizon House Crisis Facility
- Integrated Community Outreach Network in Clarington (ICONIC)
- Monday Night Group
- Oshawa Micro-Homes
- Muslim Welfare Centre
- New Life Neighbourhood Centre
- North House
- The Nourish and Development Foundation
- Operation Scugog Foodbank
- Oshawa Public Libraries
- Pickering Public Library
- PiT partners (survey locations)
- Community Resource Centre
- The Salvation Army
- Scugog Public Library
- Simcoe Hall Settlement House Food Bank
- St. Andrew's – Chalmers Presbyterian Church
- St. Andrew's Community Food Bank Whitby
- St. Peter's Anglican Church Food Bank
- St. Vincent De Paul
- The Denise House
- The Gap Committee
- The Gate 3:16 Outreach Centre
- The Refuge Youth Outreach Centre
- Uxbridge Loaves & Fishes Food Bank
- Uxbridge Public Library
- Westminster United Church
- Whitby Public Library
- Y's Wish Shelter
- YWCA

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Appendices

Appendix A: Unsheltered survey questionnaire

UNSHELTERED SURVEY

Location: _____ Time: _____

AM/PM _____

Interviewer: _____ Contact #: _____

C. Where are you staying tonight? / Where did you stay last night?

a. DECLINE TO ANSWER b. OWN APARTMENT/HOUSE	} [THANK & END SURVEY]
c. SOMEONE ELSE'S PLACE d. HOTEL/MOTEL SELF-FUNDED e. HOSPITAL f. TREATMENT CENTRE g. JAIL, PRISON, REMAND CENTRE	
C1. Do you have access to a permanent residence where you can safely stay as long as you want?	
	a. Yes [THANK & END]
	b. No (not permanent AND/OR not safe) [BEGIN SURVEY]
	c. Don't Know [BEGIN SURVEY]
	d. Decline to answer [THANK & END]
h. HOMELESS SHELTER (e.g. emergency, family or domestic violence shelter, warming centre, drop-in) i. HOTEL/MOTEL FUNDED BY CITY OR HOMELESS PROGRAM j. TRANSITIONAL SHELTER/HOUSING k. UNSHELTERED IN A PUBLIC SPACE (e.g. street, park, bus shelter, forest, or abandoned building) l. ENCAMPMENT (e.g. group of tents, makeshift shelters, or other long-term outdoor settlement) m. VEHICLE (e.g. car, van, recreational vehicle (RV), truck, boat) n. UNSURE: INDICATE PROBABLE LOCATION (b. - m.)	} [BEGIN SURVEY]

1. Have you spent at least one night in any of the following locations in the past year? (check all that apply)

☐ HOMELESS SHELTER (e.g. emergency, family or domestic violence shelter, warming centre, drop-in)	☐ SOMEONE ELSE'S PLACE BECAUSE YOU HAD NOWHERE ELSE TO GO
☐ HOTEL/MOTEL FUNDED BY CITY OR HOMELESS PROGRAM	☐ HOSPITAL OR OTHER HEALTH FACILITY
☐ TRANSITIONAL SHELTER/HOUSING	☐ JAIL, PRISON, OR OTHER CORRECTIONAL FACILITY
☐ UNSHELTERED IN A PUBLIC SPACE (e.g. street, park, bus shelter, forest, or abandoned building)	☐ NO
☐ ENCAMPMENT (e.g. group of tents, makeshift shelters, or other long-term outdoor settlement)	☐ DON'T KNOW
☐ VEHICLE (e.g. car, van, recreational vehicle (RV), truck, boat)	☐ DECLINE TO ANSWER

☐ NONE ☐ PARTNER - Survey #: _____	☐ PET(S) ☐ OTHER ADULT (Can include other family or friends)
---	---

☐ CHILD(REN)/DEPENDENT(S) [indicate age for each child/dependent]	AGE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

☐ DECLINE TO ANSWER

3. How old are you? [OR] What year were you born? (If unsure, ask for best estimate)

☐ AGE _____ OR YEAR BORN _____	☐ DON'T KNOW	☐ DECLINE TO ANSWER
--	----------------------------------	---

? For this survey, "homelessness" means any time when you have been without a permanent and secure place to live, and includes sleeping in shelters, on the streets, or living temporarily with others without having your own permanent housing (e.g. couch surfing).

4. In total, for how much time have you experienced homelessness over the PAST YEAR (the last 12 months)? (Does not need to be exact. Best estimate.)

☐ LENGTH _____ DAYS WEEKS MONTHS	☐ DON'T KNOW	☐ DECLINE TO ANSWER
--	----------------------------------	---

4b. In total, for how much time have you experienced homelessness over the PAST 3 YEARS? (Does not need to be exact. Best estimate.)

☐ LESS THAN HALF	☐ ABOUT HALF OR MORE	☐ DON'T KNOW	☐ DECLINE TO ANSWER
--------------------------------------	--	----------------------------------	---

5. How old were you the first time you experienced homelessness?

☐ AGE _____	☐ DON'T KNOW	☐ DECLINE TO ANSWER
---------------------------------	----------------------------------	---

6. Did you come to Canada as an immigrant, refugee, asylum claimant (i.e. applied for refugee status after coming to Canada), or through another process?

☐ YES, IMMIGRANT ----->	If YES: How long have you been in Canada? ☐ LENGTH: _____ DAYS WEEKS MONTHS YEARS
--	---

☐ NONE ☐ PARTNER - Survey #: _____	☐ PET(S) ☐ OTHER ADULT (Can include other family or friends)
---	---

☐ CHILD(REN)/DEPENDENT(S) [indicate age for each child/dependent]	AGE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

☐ DECLINE TO ANSWER

3. How old are you? [OR] What year were you born? (If unsure, ask for best estimate)

☐ AGE _____ OR YEAR BORN _____	☐ DON'T KNOW	☐ DECLINE TO ANSWER
--	----------------------------------	---

7 For this survey, “homelessness” means any time when you have been without a permanent and secure place to live, and includes sleeping in shelters, on the streets, or living temporarily with others without having your own permanent housing (e.g. couch surfing).

4. In total, for how much time have you experienced homelessness over the PAST YEAR (the last 12 months)? (Does not need to be exact. Best estimate.)

☐ LENGTH _____ DAYS WEEKS MONTHS	☐ DON'T KNOW	☐ DECLINE TO ANSWER
--	----------------------------------	---

4b. In total, for how much time have you experienced homelessness over the PAST 3 YEARS? (Does not need to be exact. Best estimate.)

☐ LESS THAN HALF	☐ ABOUT HALF OR MORE	☐ DON'T KNOW	☐ DECLINE TO ANSWER
--------------------------------------	--	----------------------------------	---

5. How old were you the first time you experienced homelessness?

☐ AGE _____	☐ DON'T KNOW	☐ DECLINE TO ANSWER
---------------------------------	----------------------------------	---

6. Did you come to Canada as an immigrant, refugee, asylum claimant (i.e. applied for refugee status after coming to Canada), or through another process?

☐ YES, IMMIGRANT ----->	If YES: How long have you been in Canada? ☐ LENGTH: _____ DAYS WEEKS MONTHS YEARS
--	---



9. Have you ever served in the Canadian Military or RCMP?

(Military includes Canadian Navy, Army, and Air Force, Regular and Reserve, Army Rangers including completing basic training)

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|
| ☐ YES, MILITARY | ☐ BOTH MILITARY AND RCMP | ☐ DON'T KNOW |
| ☐ YES, RCMP | ☐ NO | ☐ DECLINE TO ANSWER |

10. As a child or youth, were you ever in foster care or in a youth group home (COMMUNITY

NOTE: include any other Provincial child welfare programs)? (Note: This question applies specifically to child welfare programs.)

- | | | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| ☐ YES | ☐ NO | ☐ DON'T KNOW | ☐ DECLINE TO ANSWER |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|---|

11. Have you been experiencing difficulties related to any of the following:

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW	DECLINE TO ANSWER
ILLNESS OR MEDICAL CONDITION (e.g. diabetes, tuberculosis (TB) or human immunodeficiency virus (HIV))	☐	☐	☐	☐
PHYSICAL MOBILITY (e.g. spinal cord injury, arthritis, or limited movement or dexterity)	☐	☐	☐	☐
LEARNING, INTELLECTUAL/DEVELOPMENTAL, OR COGNITIVE FUNCTION (e.g. fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD), autism, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), dyslexia or dementia)	☐	☐	☐	☐
ACQUIRED BRAIN INJURY (e.g. due to an accident, violence, overdose, stroke, or brain tumour)	☐	☐	☐	☐
MENTAL HEALTH [diagnosed/undiagnosed] (e.g. depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), bipolar, or schizophrenia)	☐	☐	☐	☐
SUBSTANCE USE (e.g. alcohol or opiates)	☐	☐	☐	☐
SENSES, SUCH AS SEEING OR HEARING (e.g. blindness or deafness)	☐	☐	☐	☐

12. What gender do you identify with? (Show list or read list.)

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|--|---|
| ☐ MAN | ☐ TRANS WOMAN | ☐ NOT LISTED: _____ |
| ☐ WOMAN | ☐ TRANS MAN | ☐ DON'T KNOW |
| ☐ TWO-SPIRIT | ☐ NON-BINARY (GENDERQUEER) | ☐ DECLINE TO ANSWER |

13. How do you describe your sexual orientation, for example straight, gay, lesbian? (Show list or read list.)

- | | | | |
|---|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| ☐ STRAIGHT/HETEROSEXUAL | ☐ BISEXUAL | ☐ ASEXUAL | ☐ NOT LISTED: _____ |
| ☐ GAY | ☐ TWO-SPIRIT | ☐ QUEER | ☐ DON'T KNOW |
| ☐ LESBIAN | ☐ PANSEXUAL | ☐ QUESTIONING | ☐ DECLINE TO ANSWER |

14. What happened that caused you to lose your housing most recently? (Do not read the options. Check all that apply. “Housing” does not include temporary arrangements (e.g., couch surfing) or shelter stays. Follow up for the reason if the respondent says “eviction” or that they “chose to leave”.)

HOUSING AND FINANCIAL ISSUES ☐ NOT ENOUGH INCOME FOR HOUSING (e.g. rental increase, loss of benefit, income or job) ☐ UNFIT/UNSAFE HOUSING CONDITION ☐ BUILDING SOLD OR RENOVATED ☐ OWNER MOVED IN	CONFLICT WITH: ☐ SPOUSE/PARTNER ☐ PARENT/GUARDIAN ☐ LANDLORD ☐ OTHER (_____)	EXPERIENCED DISCRIMINATION BY: ☐ SPOUSE/PARTNER ☐ PARENT/GUARDIAN ☐ LANDLORD ☐ OTHER (_____)
OTHER ☐ COMPLAINT (e.g. noise/damage) ☐ LEFT THE COMMUNITY/RELOCATED ☐ DEATH OR DEPARTURE OF FAMILY MEMBER ☐ PET(S) ☐ OTHER REASON _____ _____ _____	EXPERIENCED ABUSE BY: ☐ SPOUSE/PARTNER ☐ PARENT/GUARDIAN ☐ LANDLORD ☐ OTHER (_____)	HEALTH OR CORRECTIONS ☐ PHYSICAL HEALTH ISSUE/DISABILITY ☐ MENTAL HEALTH ISSUE ☐ SUBSTANCE USE ISSUE ☐ HOSPITALIZATION OR TREATMENT PROGRAM ☐ INCARCERATION (jail or prison)
	☐ DON'T KNOW	☐ DECLINE TO ANSWER

14b. Was your most recent housing loss related to an eviction?

☐ YES	☐ NO	☐ DON'T KNOW	☐ DECLINE TO ANSWER
---------------------------	--------------------------	----------------------------------	---

14c. How long ago did that happen (that you lost your housing most recently)? (Best estimate)

☐ LENGTH _____ DAYS WEEKS MONTHS YEARS	☐ DON'T KNOW	☐ DECLINE TO ANSWER
--	----------------------------------	---

15. What are your sources of income? (Reminder that this survey is anonymous. **Read list** and check all that apply)

Formal or Informal Work ☐ FULL TIME EMPLOYMENT ☐ PART TIME EMPLOYMENT	Benefits ☐ EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE ☐ DISABILITY BENEFIT (name of Prov. DISABILITY BENEFIT) ☐ SENIORS BENEFITS (e.g. CPP/OAS/GIS) ☐ WELFARE/SOCIAL ASSISTANCE (Prov. benefit) ☐ VETERAN/VAC BENEFITS ☐ CHILD AND FAMILY BENEFITS ☐ GST/HST REFUND	Other ☐ MONEY FROM FAMILY/FRIENDS ☐ OTHER MONEY FROM A SERVICE AGENCY ☐ OTHER: _____ ☐ NO INCOME ☐ DON'T KNOW ☐ DECLINE TO ANSWER
--	--	--

Appendices

Appendix B: Unsheltered survey questionnaire

UNSHELTERED TALLY SHEET

Area: _____ Time: ____ to ____ Surveyor: _____ Contact phone #: _____

Instructions: To record *observed homelessness*, please take note of those who decline to or are unable to respond, but who may be experiencing homelessness in the table below. Please also indicate the reason you believe they are experiencing homelessness (e.g., asleep outside with belongings).

	Location	Encampment? (Y/N)	Reason not surveyed (select one)		Indicators of Homelessness (e.g., asleep outside with belongings)	Gift Card Given?
			Declined	Unable		
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
13						
14						
15						
16						
17						
18						



If you require this information in an accessible format, please contact the Accessibility Coordinator by emailing accessibility@durham.ca or calling 905-338-7711 ext. 2805.