

Homelessness in Our Community Austin, Travis County

An Overview of the work done
Ending Community Homelessness Coalition
and our Partners

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Executive Director



Ending Community Homelessness Coalition (ECHO)

ECHO is:

- The **lead agency** that plans and implements **community-wide strategies** to end homelessness in Austin and Travis County.
- The **backbone** for the **homeless services system** and work closely with nonprofits and government agencies to coordinate assistance and housing for people experiencing homelessness in our community.
- We **believe** it is the **community's responsibility** to provide a **compassionate response** and ensure homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

What is Coordinated Entry?



- ECHO's Coordinated Entry system provides a **single-entry point** for people experiencing homelessness to access vital community resources.
- Coordinated Entry is required for **Continuum of Care** funded programs.
- The Coordinated Entry team develops, implements, and oversees a system that ensures community providers collaboratively and efficiently **connect households to the services, support programs, and housing** to help end their homelessness.
- If the **PIT Count provides a snapshot** on one day per year, the Coordinated Entry system (captured within the Homeless Management Information System or HMIS) provides a **rolling video of people served** over time.

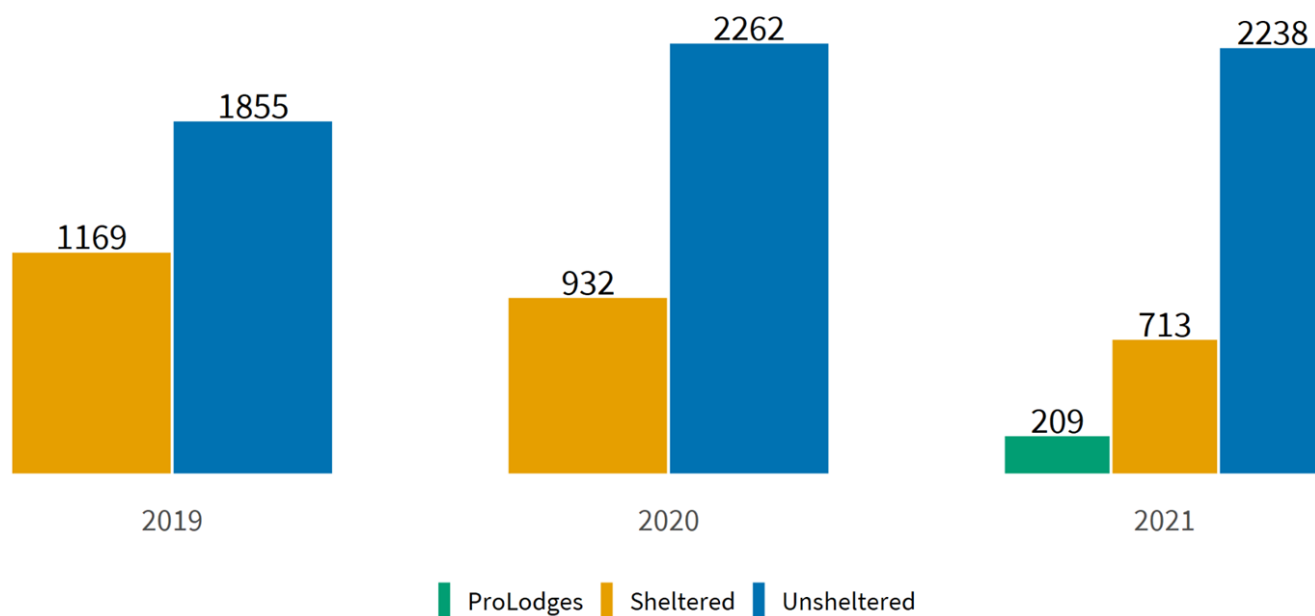
Alternative Methodology in 2021 - HMIS

Method

- Our alternative methodology to estimate **unsheltered homelessness** uses data from our local Homeless Management Information System (**HMIS**), a centralized database used by service providers.
- We pulled data from HMIS on **January 28, 2021** to get a **snapshot** of homelessness on that day.
- We counted the number of people who were unsheltered, seeking housing, and had interacted with the Homelessness Response System in the prior **180 days** (average length of unsheltered homelessness).

Point Prevalence of Homelessness, 2019-2021

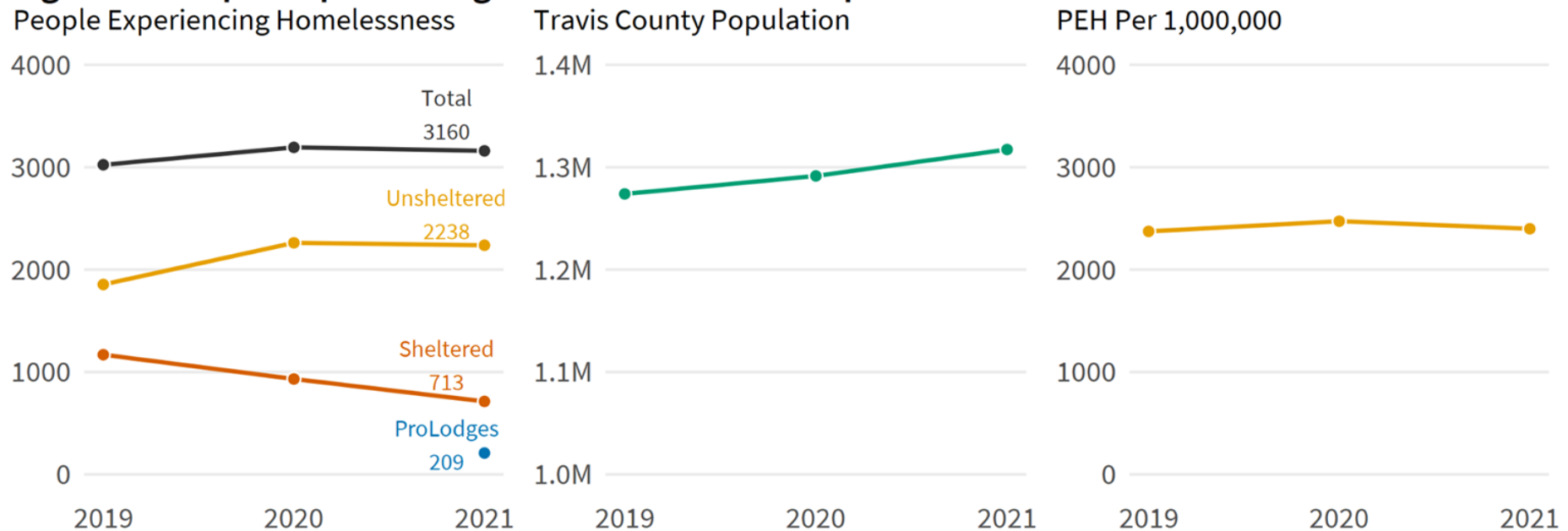
Figure 1. Point Prevalence of Homelessness in Austin/Travis County Homelessness Response System, 2019-2021



Sources: Sheltered and unsheltered counts come from HMIS, and the ProLodges count comes from the City of Austin's Emergency Operations Center.

Trends Over Time Relative to Total Population

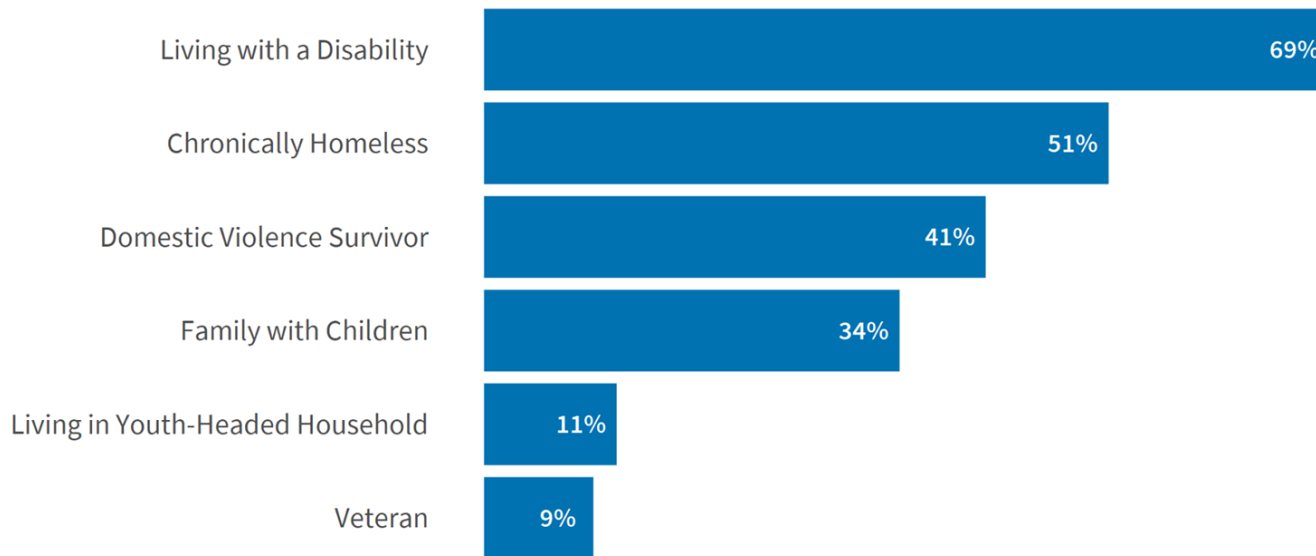
Figure 2. People Experiencing Homelessness Per Capita



Subpopulation Breakdown, 2021

Figure 3. Subpopulation Breakdown, 2021

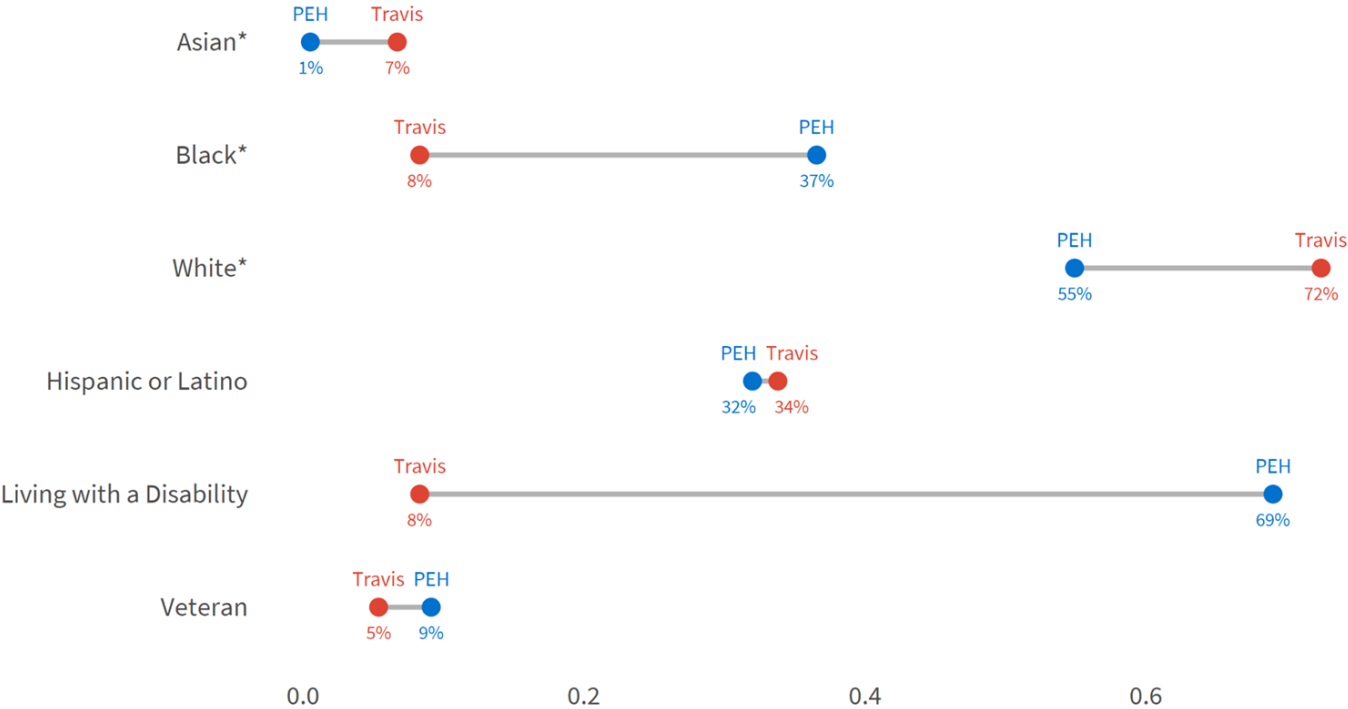
Percent of People Experiencing Homelessness



Notes: "Living with a disability" includes people who report a physical, mental, or emotional disability, including alcohol/drug abuse, PTSD, developmental disabilities, and HIV/AIDS. "Family" includes all people living in households with a person under the age of 18. "Living in Youth-Headed Household" includes all people living in a household headed by someone under the age of 25.

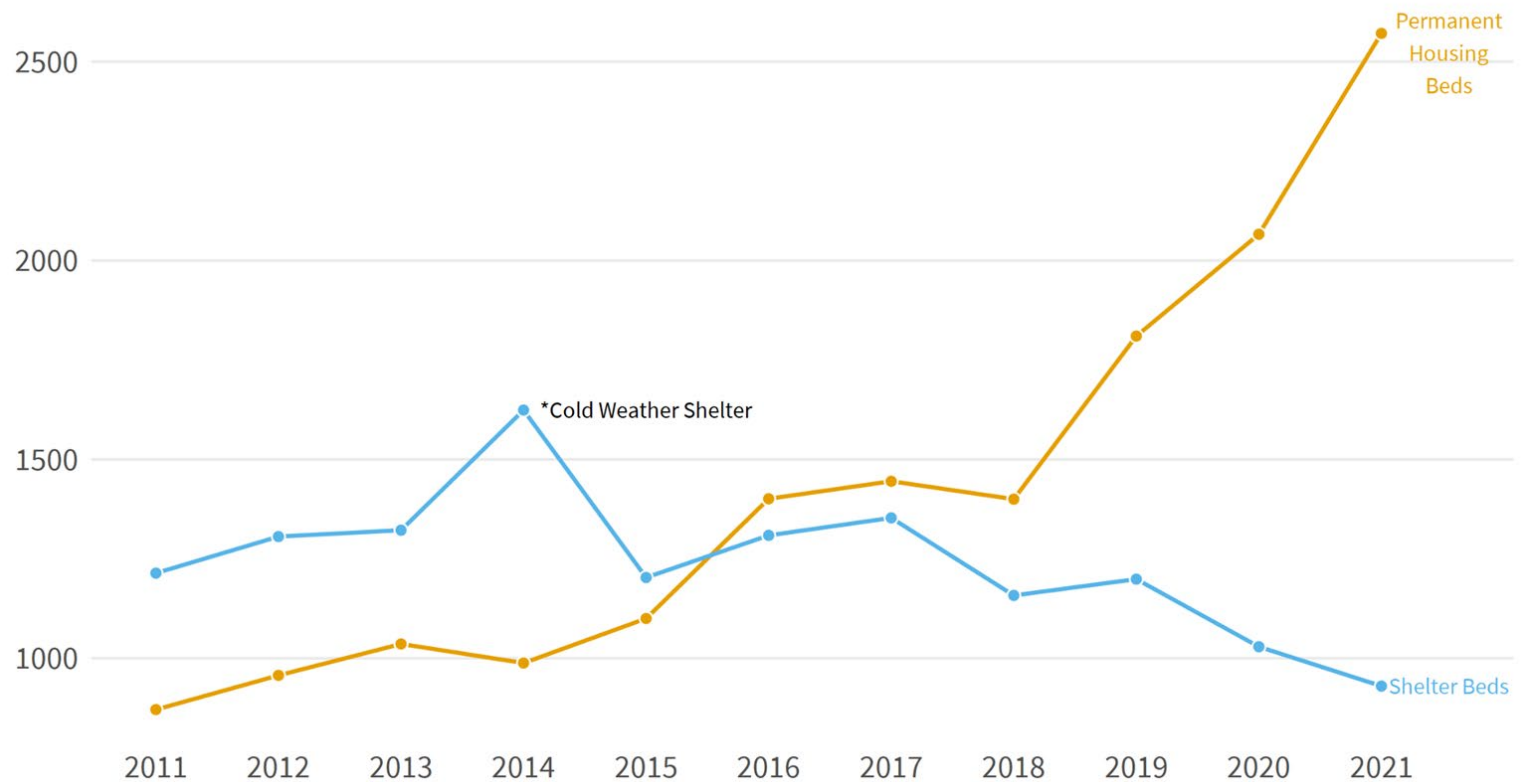
PEH Subpopulations Relative to Travis County

Figure 4. Percent of People Experiencing Homelessness by Race, Ethnicity, Disability Status, and Veteran Status, 2021
Relative to Travis County Population



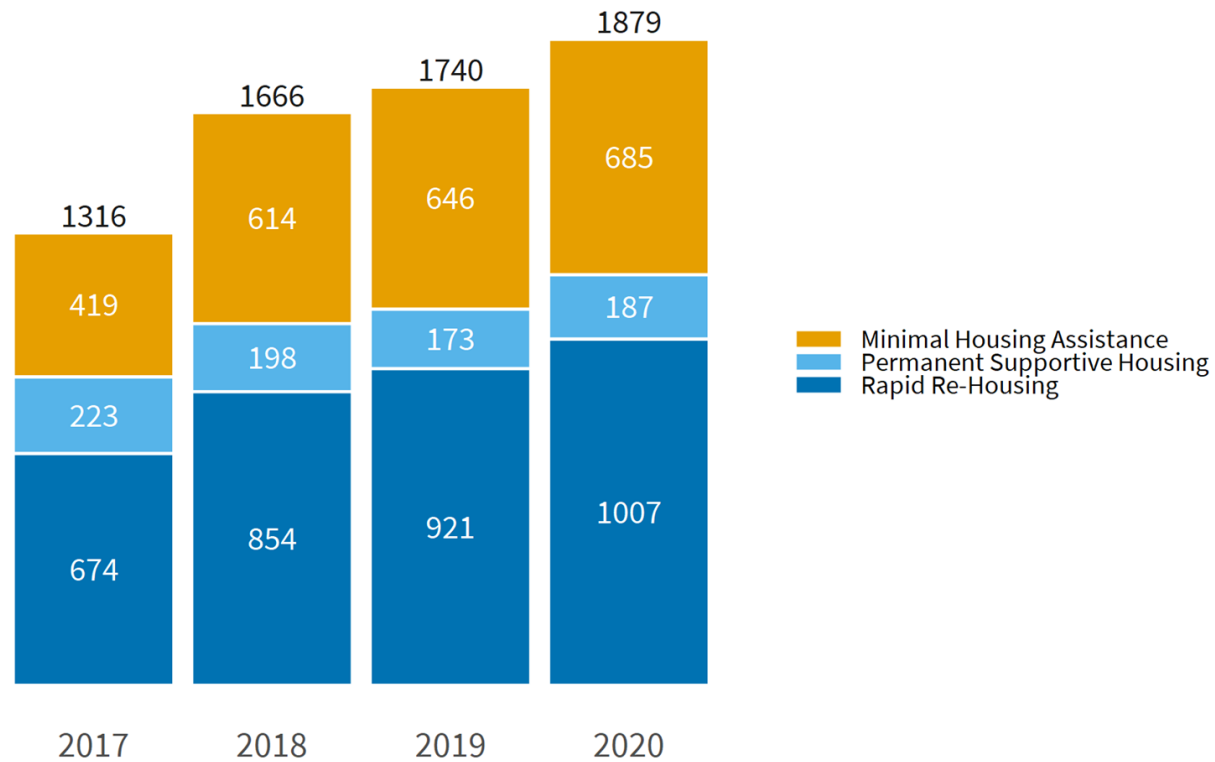
Homeless Response System Capacity Over Time

Figure 5. Shelter and Permanent Housing Bed Capacity, 2011-2021



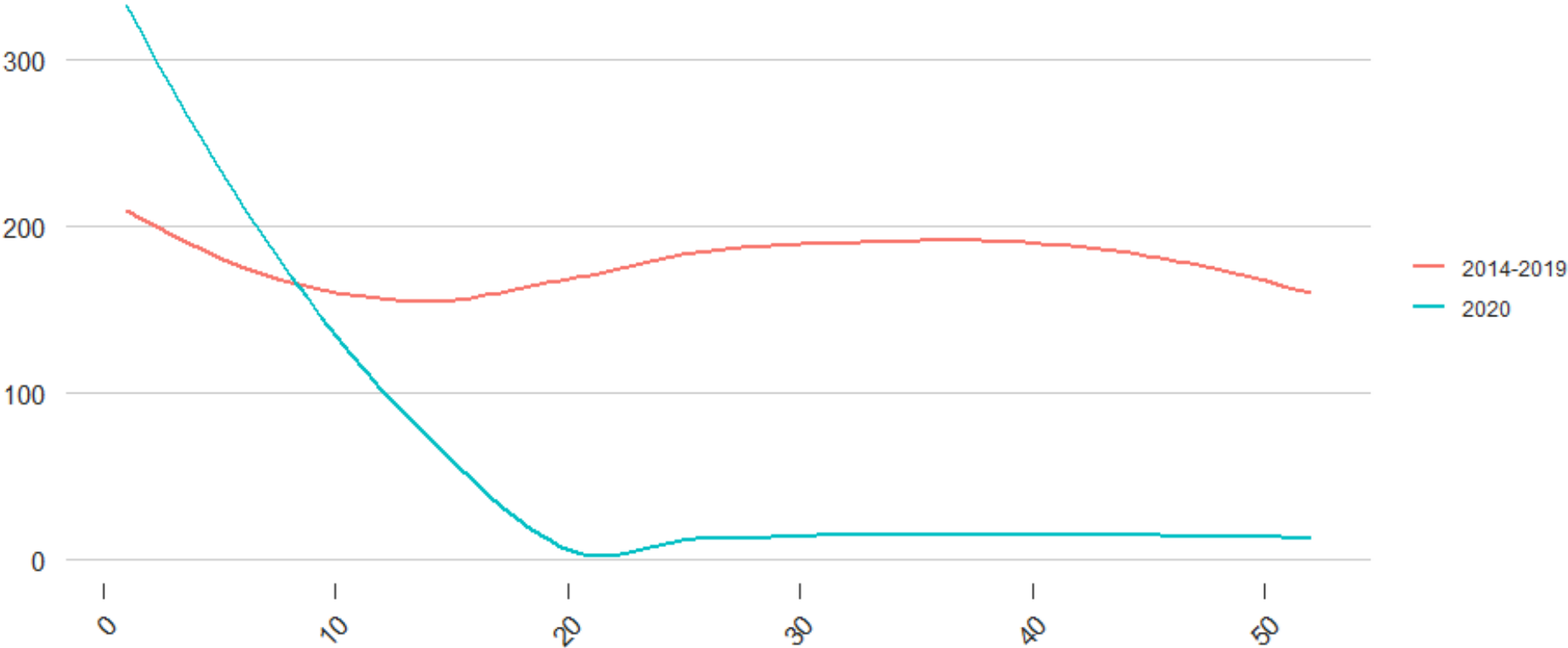
Number of People Permanently Housed Over Time

Figure 6. Clients Housed in Austin/Travis County, 2017-2020



Eviction Filings in Austin, 2014-2020

By Week of the Year



Sources: Eviction Lab via BASTA Austin, Open Austin, and January Advisors.
Available at <https://evictionlab.org>

Partner Efforts Toward Ending Homelessness - Current

Continuum of Care (CoC) partners accomplished a lot in 2020:

- **SAFE** provided Rapid Re-Housing services to 170 youth and adult survivors of violence and abuse, a 48% increase over 2019.
- **LifeWorks** assisted more than 283 youth exit homelessness. Since the 2018 concerted effort to end youth homelessness, LifeWorks and partners have housed more than 800 youth.
- **Integral Care** completed 163 intakes or assessments for mental health services through the 3,000 Oak Springs Clinic for individuals at the ProLodges and housed a total of 142 people.
- **The Salvation Army** sheltered over 560 children under pandemic conditions to help ensure that, “No Child Sleeps Outside”.
- **Front Steps** reduced the number of people staying nightly in shelter to proactively combat the transmission of COVID-19 and connected additional clients to one of the five ProLodges, where, with Front Steps’ support, the daily average of people served reached 305.

System Partners did as well:

- The **Eating Apart Together (EAT) Initiative**, a City of Austin-led partnership delivered more than 500,000 meals in 2020 across Austin/Travis County and will reach 1 million meals delivered in May of 2021.
- **Hotel Conversions for PSH** (Candlewood Suites, Texas Bungalows)
- **Non-congregate shelter**: Rodeway Inn, Country Inn & Suites (new capacity)
- **Emergency response non-congregate lodging**: ProLodge crisis
- **ESG CV Funding** - ECHO helped to coordinate \$15.5M to serve 533 people in 2020
- **Foundation Communities** opened Waterloo Terrace (132 units) in December 2020 (not counted in HIC)

Partner Efforts Toward Ending Homelessness - Future

- The **City of Austin** purchased two hotels to convert into bridge and permanent housing for people experiencing homelessness in 2020, adding two more thus far in 2021. Each of these properties adds dozens of new units to the homeless response system.
- **HACA** Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV) and Mainstream Vouchers (MV):
 - 242 HCV from American Rescue Plan
 - 750 HCV over next 5 years
 - 50 MV (for non-elderly disabled households)
- **Summit (March-April 2021)** - Multi-partner summit to address unsheltered homelessness in Austin/Travis County.
- **Summit Surge** - Starting spring 2021 (additional 3000 housed in 3 years)
- **At Home Initiative** - To house 250 individuals in PSH (Funders include St. David's Foundation, Seton, Travis County, HUD DOJ)
- **Caritas** will launch the Espero Austin at Rutland adding 172 units (December 2022)
- **Mobile Loaves and Fishes** will add 1400 units over 10 years (not counted in HIC)

What are the risk factors for homelessness?

- **Community level** - income inequality, lack of affordable housing, lack of educational and economic opportunity, lack of mental health and social services, racism and discrimination
- **Family level** - poverty, family disorganization, history of parental substance abuse, history of parental mental illness, family violence, parental incarceration, change in economic status (e.g. parental job loss)
- **Individual level** – history of child abuse and/or neglect, history of trauma or violence experienced as an adult, history of military service, history of incarceration, mental health issues, substance abuse issues
- **Immediate risk factors** – violence victimization, divorce, death of a loved one, job loss, eviction, addiction, incarceration

Ending Homelessness in Austin: Future State

System Components to End Homelessness in Austin/Travis County



ADDRESSING UNSHELTERED HOMELESSNESS

There are four required components to successfully address unsheltered homelessness.

Reducing Inflow	Crisis Response	Housing Stabilization	Public Space Management
RESPONSIBILITY: Public Systems	RESPONSIBILITY: Homelessness Assistance System		RESPONSIBILITY: City & County Government
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Justice Anti-Poverty Prevention Health, including behavioral health Child Welfare System Affordable Housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Austin Public Health Continuum of Care and ECHO Outreach Emergency shelter & temporary housing Housing providers First responders Health, including behavioral health providers 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor and City Council City Manager Code enforcement Public Health Law enforcement Parks Outreach Libraries Businesses and business organizations Faith-based organizations
Use data to identify how people are becoming homeless and target prevention strategies and policies to these areas.	Investment in housing stabilization capacity will make crisis response more effective and efficient.		To reduce expenditures, increase efforts to reduce inflow and expand homeless assistance system.

Community Involvement

- Find ECHO on our website, Facebook, Twitter
 - <https://www.austinecho.org/>
- Volunteer with the annual Point in Time Count of persons experiencing homelessness (end of January, 2021)
- Volunteer with our partner organizations
 - <https://www.austinecho.org/about-echo/partners/>
- Educate your peers: Be a myth buster