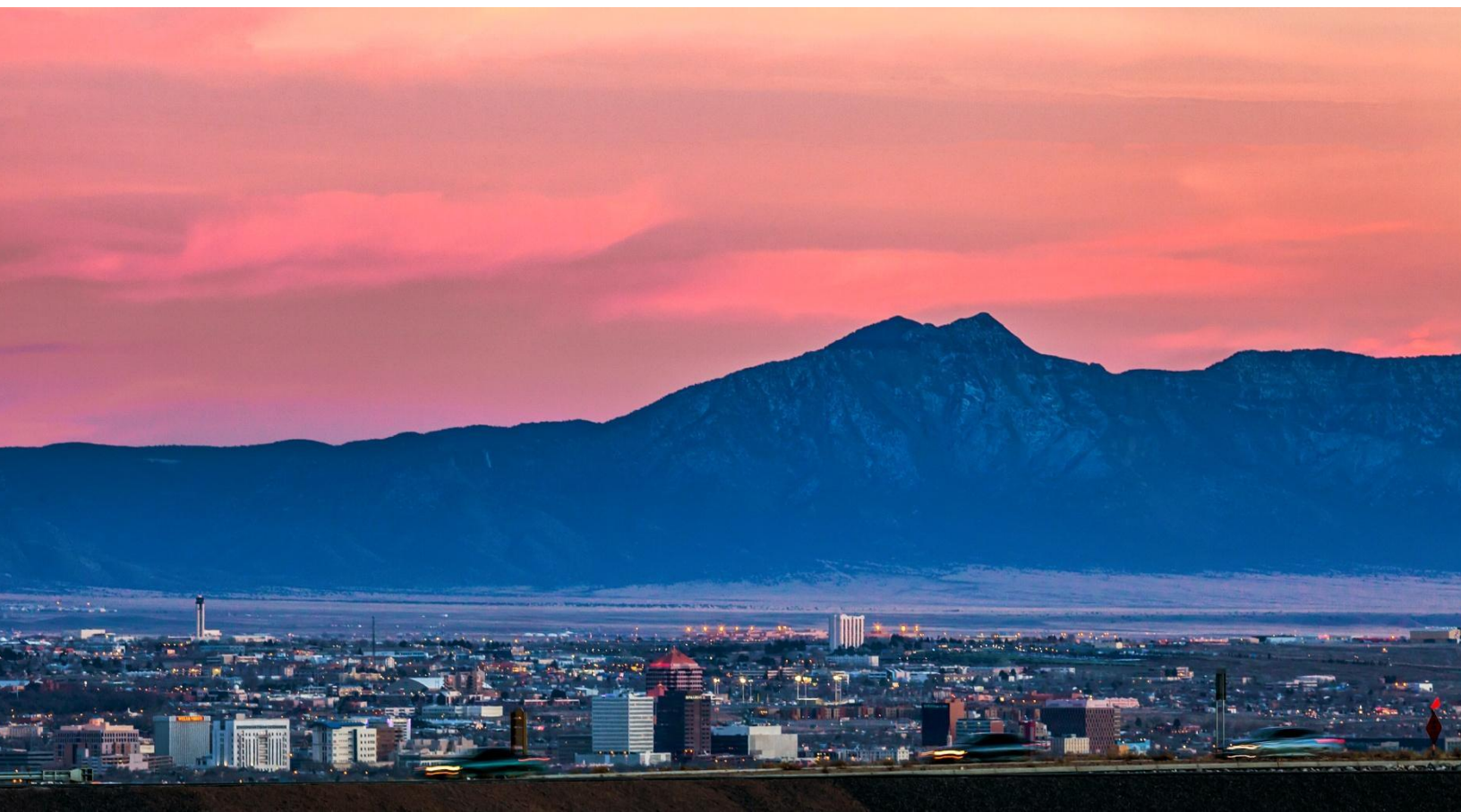


# 2021 Point-In-Time Count

*Joint Albuquerque and Balance of State Report*



**Prepared By:**



New Mexico Coalition to  
End Homelessness

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## (1) Introduction

The Point-In-Time (PIT) count is a nationwide count of individuals and families experiencing homelessness within a community on a given night, as outlined and defined by the U.S. Housing and Urban Development Department (HUD)<sup>1</sup>. HUD requires that any community receiving funding from the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Grants, which includes both the Continuum of Care (CoC) and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funding, conduct an annual Sheltered and a biennial Unsheltered PIT Count. The City of Albuquerque receives funding from both streams for the Albuquerque area. The New Mexico Mortgage Finance Authority receives ESG funding to distribute across the state. The New Mexico Coalition to End Homelessness receives CoC funding for the Balance of State (the state outside of Albuquerque). Both CoCs and their memberships have identified that communities benefit greatly from this engagement with our community members to better understand the trends, issues, gaps and demographics of our fellow residents experiencing homelessness. By engaging in the annual count, we hope to provide better information to service providers, governmental entities and everyday residents of New Mexico to work together on developing effective and solution-based interventions in addressing homelessness across the state.

This year, 2021, the night of the PIT count took place on Monday, January 25th. In order to most accurately and safely count the number of people experiencing homelessness in New Mexico on January 25th, NMCEH coordinated activities for the PIT count that lasted up to seven days immediately following the night of the PIT, January 26th - February 1st. In Albuquerque, NMCEH coordinated the unsheltered PIT in partnership with the City of Albuquerque and numerous homeless service providers across the City. For the Balance of State, NMCEH coordinated the PIT with various partner agencies and entities in communities across the state of New Mexico, with larger organizational hubs in Las Cruces, Farmington, Gallup, and Santa Fe. During this we, we had a number of street outreach teams, and volunteers from agencies across the state canvassing neighborhoods, alleys, parks, high-traffic areas, known encampments and points of congregation, meal service sites, and general service sites to engage and survey people who identified as being in a homeless situation on the night of January 25th. This change from street outreach teams and volunteers to only street outreach teams and volunteers from partner agencies was needed as a precaution during the COVID-19 Pandemic as it ensured there was accurate access to limited PPE and staff with training in COVID-19 precautions were being utilized to limit any potential furthering of community spread. The purpose of the survey conducted was to collect demographic data, information about the person's experience of homelessness, and data that could be used to better fill in the community's knowledge of systemic gaps in services for people experiencing homelessness.

People residing in Emergency Shelters (ES) and Transitional Housing (TH), known for the purposes of this count as Sheltered, were counted by a combination of information from our statewide Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and a survey for programs that do not participate in HMIS (usually domestic violence, youth or non-federally funded providers). HMIS stores enrollment and demographic data for homeless individuals and families staying in ES or TH. People residing in TH or ES on the night of the count were not given the same survey as Unsheltered persons experiencing homelessness as the data for the Sheltered population was collected through the program survey or HMIS data.

The combination of the Sheltered and Unsheltered count provides a snapshot of the homeless population in New Mexico on one winter night. The snapshot is then shared with the community in this biennial report. The report serves both as a way to meet the federal reporting requirement for the PIT, but also to explain the data and to provide context to the community about people experiencing homeless in New Mexico.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/hdx/guides/pit-hic/#2021-pit-count-and-hic-guidance-and-training>

While the PIT count is currently the most widely-used methodology for enumerating people experiencing homeless, it is not an exact count and has a margin of error. The margin of error is due to the fact that the numbers are greatly affected by the level of community engagement, methodology, weather, incorrect data submissions, data being largely self-reported, etc. Numbers in this report should be taken to indicate trends rather than exact, unwavering figures. Conducting the PIT count during a year in which there was a global pandemic, with a variety of restrictions to protect all citizens, has created a rather different look to any data gathered, as it was more difficult than in past years to gather more accurate information on the amount of people experiencing homelessness due to lack of community volunteers, limited geography and time frames, closure of regular services due to restrictions, and a population experiencing homelessness that was potentially being moved constantly and rapidly from former points of congregation.

## New Mexico Coalition to End Homelessness



The New Mexico Coalition to End Homelessness (NMCEH) is a statewide nonprofit committed to the planning, coordination, awareness, and advocacy of reducing and bringing an end to homelessness across the state. To ensure inclusivity of diverse stakeholders throughout the state, NMCEH membership is comprised of numerous organizations, people and entities that are committed to ending homelessness in New Mexico, such as: nonprofit homeless service providers, government entities, private businesses, community advocates, public housing agencies, hospitals, universities, affordable housing developers, and people who have lived experience of homelessness. NMCEH develops recommendations for communities to create resolutions for people experiencing homelessness through programs and services that fill needs within the community.

NMCEH is contracted by the City of Albuquerque to coordinate the activities of the Albuquerque Continuum of Care (CoC). For the rest of the state, known as the Balance of State (BoS) CoC, NMCEH serves as the Continuum of Care. A CoC is composed of organizational representatives including, but not limited to: nonprofit homeless service providers, victim service providers, faith-based organizations, governments, businesses, advocates, public housing agencies, school districts, social service providers, mental health agencies, hospitals, universities, affordable housing developers, law enforcement, organizations that serve homeless and formerly homeless veterans, and people who have lived experience of homelessness. The CoC is more than just a funding source for housing, it is also a level of community collaboration that supports gaining access to housing and supportive services for everyone experiencing homelessness.

As the lead for the Continuums of Care, NMCEH coordinates the Point-in-Time counts for communities across the State of New Mexico. The following report goes on to explain the efforts that the Albuquerque and Balance of State CoCs took to conduct the Unsheltered and Sheltered Point-In-Time Count in 2021.



## **(2) Questions and Limitations**

### **Is the PIT count conducted every year?**

The PIT count is conducted every year. However, HUD only requires that communities include an Unsheltered count biennially (every other year). NMCEH publishes this report on years in which the Unsheltered count is conducted. Due to the increased need to understand accurate data on people experiencing homelessness, NMCEH, with community support, intends to begin conducting the unsheltered PIT count yearly beginning in 2022, on a trial basis to ascertain how it will impact providers, volunteers, and the community beyond collecting more accurate and yearly data points.

### **Does this report reflect statewide data?**

The state of New Mexico has two Continuums of Care (CoC): Albuquerque CoC and the Balance of State CoC. Each CoC conducts separate counts for their respective geographical coverage area. Though counts are conducted separately for each CoC, this report will include data for both Albuquerque and the Balance of State, divided into separate sections. The combination of the two CoC's provides geographic coverage of the entire state.

### **Are these numbers representative of the exact number of people experiencing homelessness?**

These numbers should be reviewed to understand trends over time instead of taken as exact figures. Hundreds of hours were spent collecting, entering, and validating this data, however, PIT count numbers were submitted or collected by different community members, service providers, and individuals currently experiencing homelessness. The reliability of this count can be influenced by many factors, such as: number of enumerators, community engagement, understanding of training, location and time of the survey, and weather. Additionally, most of this data is self-reported directly from people experiencing homelessness.

As there were community and HUD enforced restrictions in place for the 2021 count, the numbers reflected may be drastically lower than in previous years or show an inaccurate trending in data.

### **Are individual's data shared with law enforcement or other government entities?**

Data is shared only in aggregate form and is distributed equally to all community members. The unsheltered survey does not collect names and only collects enough information to de-duplicate surveys; there is never enough information provided, or asked for, to identify an individual person.

### **Is it ethical to “count the homeless”?**

The PIT count is a federal requirement. It is implemented with training for the enumerators, who are directed in various forms of compassionate outreach. We seek to count how many people there are experiencing homelessness to understand the causes of their experience, to develop new interventions, and to connect them to services. We count people experiencing homelessness because we do not want them to become invisible. We also understand that the language of “counting” and “counting the homeless” is problematic, and are always looking for ways to refine HUD's language with respect and acknowledgement for people experiencing homelessness.

## **Do most people experiencing homelessness in Albuquerque come from outside of Albuquerque?**

According to the data collected from the unsheltered survey, most people experiencing unsheltered homelessness in Albuquerque were residents of Albuquerque prior to becoming homeless.

## **Do most people experiencing homelessness in New Mexico come from outside of New Mexico?**

According to the data collected from the unsheltered survey, the majority of people experiencing homelessness within New Mexico came from communities (or Indigenous lands) within the geographic confines of the state of New Mexico or the Navajo Nation.

## **Do most people experiencing homelessness have mental illness or substance abuse issues?**

Our report showed that in Albuquerque, 30.19% of the surveyed adults experiencing homelessness self-reported having a serious mental illness (SMI) and in the Balance of State, 37.92%. Regarding substance use disorder (SUD), 25.5% of surveyed adults in Albuquerque self-reported having one, while the Balance of State totaled at 68.3%.

## **How is “homeless” defined?**

For this report, the HUD definition of homeless was used to determine living situation<sup>2</sup>. This does not include people who are doubled up with family or friends, couch surfing, unstable living conditions, or residing in substandard living conditions nor does it include additional federal or local definitions of homelessness. NMCEH notes the differences in definitions and that this may create differences between datasets using other definitions of homelessness, or create a viewpoint of persons experiencing homelessness that the community may believe looks different based on how homelessness is defined outside of HUD funded programs. The PIT counts two types of living situations: those residing in an unsheltered situation and those residing in a sheltered situation on the night of January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

Sheltered Homeless: are those who, on the night of the count, are residing in an emergency shelter, motel paid through a provider, or transitional housing program.

Unsheltered Homeless: are those that are sleeping in places not meant for human habitation, including: streets, parks, alleys, the Bosque, underpasses, transfer stations, all night commercial establishments (e.g., waiting rooms, laundromats, restaurants), abandoned buildings, building roofs or stairwells, caves, campgrounds, vehicles, and other similar places.

## **Why is Hispanic/Latino not classified as a race?**

This is an example of how Federal terminology does not always line up with how people actually identify. For reporting, HUD uses the federal definition of Hispanic or Latino<sup>3</sup> as an ethnicity that refers to a person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, Central or South American, or other Spanish culture or origin and states that Hispanics or Latinos can be of any race. Though this does not always mean that people of any race from any potential Spanish origin may identify as Hispanic or Latino.

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<sup>2</sup> [https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/HEARTH\\_HomelessDefinition\\_FinalRule.pdf](https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/HEARTH_HomelessDefinition_FinalRule.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hispanic\\_and\\_Latino\\_Americans](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hispanic_and_Latino_Americans) & <https://www.doi.gov/pmb/eeo/directives/race-data>



## Limitations of the PIT count

*(please see Summary of COVID-19 considerations for changes to these)*

### A. Multi-day count

NMCEH coordinates the PIT count over multiple days. This practice introduces many variables that are difficult to control during data entry and clean-up. The multiple-day count increases the likelihood of duplicated surveys. It also relies on people retroactively self-reporting that they were homeless on the night of the count, up to a week after the night in question. It is possible that persons who found temporary or permanent shelter/housing in the following days after the night of the count, using this method those persons would not end up included in the count. Additionally, through this method surveyors are out conducting the count during the day, when many people could be traveling, indoors with friends and family, or visiting a day program that may not be covered by the efforts.

### B. Refusals

Feedback from people conducting the PIT count indicated that it is difficult to discern what may count as a full refusal to answer a question or participate entirely, as not all participants may blatantly refuse, but rather avoid answering. These circumstances can be hard to navigate and are common. People experiencing homelessness are often concerned about participation in surveys for various reasons.

### C. Missing data

Some surveys are returned with incomplete data. Data on other household members is the most sparsely collected. Because names are not collected for children, it was not possible to reliably "de-duplicate" this population. For example, if they were staying with other youth or adults according to the survey, it is likely, though not guaranteed, that the others were surveyed as well.

### D. HUD racial/ethnicity categories

People do not always answer these questions in the way HUD intended, and people who are multi-racial are required to be grouped into the two-or-more race category even if they do not identify as such. This greatly obscures individuals with diverse racial backgrounds, and may especially disproportionately reduce the Hispanic/Latino count. Surveyors at times find the Federal racial/ethnic distinctions confusing as well, and this creates difficulty in helping respondents to understand the distinction in the survey.

## (3) 2021 Point-In-Time Count Methodology

### Summary of COVID-19 Considerations

HUD placed several considerations on communities for conducting the unsheltered Point in Time count during the COVID-19 Pandemic. In order to slow community spread, HUD asked that community volunteers not be used, unless they were under 55, had training in COVID safe engagement practices and there was enough PPE. Due to the status of the pandemic in New Mexico at the time of the count, it was determined that there was not capacity to recruit and provide adequate PPE for a large number of volunteers to support the count. This put the bulk of the work of surveying on the shoulders of street outreach and other staff of homeless service agencies. The removal of volunteers lowered the capacity to survey large amounts of geography in multiple communities and also limited times of surveying due to the capacity of agencies. Though the time to survey community members was increased for a full week following the night of the count on January 25, 2021, limitations still existed in terms of the amount and ability of surveyors, and geographic areas able to be covered. Due to these considerations for COVID-19, a decrease in numbers was anticipated, as was an increase in higher rates of duplicate surveys.

### Data Sources

#### PIT unsheltered survey

The survey used a 10-question survey (with 6 additional questions at the end) developed through collaboration with NMCEH and the community partners across the state who expressed interest in supporting. Completed surveys were entered into an online form which could collate the information into a spreadsheet to organize all responses for further data cleaning. The survey used by both CoCs is included at the end of this report for reference.

#### Additional questions

Additional questions were added to the unsheltered survey that were not captured for the sheltered count through HMIS data or the Non-HMIS agency survey. These questions are used to understand trends of people residing in an unsheltered living situation. The following questions were added:

- How long have you lived here (City/Town/Village)?
- What is the last city or state you resided in before coming here?
- What brought you here?
- Were you homeless when you came here?
- Are you attending school?
- Are you employed?

#### Locations

##### A. Site-based

Outreach teams and site-based staff conducted the survey with people as they accessed participating or known site-based services. Site-based services are those services that are located in a set place that people have to travel to in order to access. Examples of participating agencies include meal service sites and community health centers. Where possible, the unsheltered survey was administered to every person accessing services during the week following the night of the PIT. However, at some sites it was not possible to administer the survey to every person who accessed services during the week-long window and some people refused,

were sheltered on the night of the count, had already completed the survey, or a known service site had to temporarily close due to the pandemic.

## B. Street Outreach

NMCEH worked with outreach teams in Albuquerque, Santa Fe, Gallup, and Las Cruces to identify key locations to canvas and emphasize for their outreach efforts, this included places where persons were known to be rough-sleeping or congregating. Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and placing importance on the safety and wellbeing of both street outreach and people experiencing homelessness to decrease transmission as much as possible, coverage in all communities was directed to places identified as “hot spots,” current street outreach engagement sites, and as many day sites that were still in operation with pandemic restrictions. Additionally, there was limited volunteer participation as planning included ensuring that the persons supporting the count had proper access to PPE and were informed and practiced at using COVID-19 safe methods of engagement. Street outreach workers went to designated areas at specified times to conduct surveys and try to connect people to services. All surveys were returned to the NMCEH or completed online by street outreach that had requested access to the digital survey. NMCEH staff entered the surveys onto a digital form and then generated a spreadsheet from the data on the form. Then staff used the first two letters of a respondent’s first name, first two letters of the last name, age and identified gender to create a unique identifier for this person. Duplicate records were eliminated if the unique identifier and the answer to where the person slept on January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021 were the same.

## HMIS Shelter and Transitional Housing data

Demographic information for individuals staying in emergency or transitional shelters on January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021 was extracted from the HMIS database. This data was similar to the data collected through the unsheltered survey minus the additional unsheltered question list above.

## Non-HMIS participating Emergency Shelters and Transitional Housing

Shelters and Transitional Housing programs that were not participating in HMIS completed an alternative survey that was returned to NMCEH, with particular questions depending on the type of program. All questions ultimately reflected general demographic information that would be captured in HMIS. Due to the sensitive nature of the populations of these Shelters and Transitional Housing programs (e.g., domestic violence shelters), only aggregated data was collected.

## Data Entry and Cleaning

### A. General data cleaning

In order to ensure data was accurate, NMCEH completed extensive data clean-up. This involved logic checks on variables to make sure calculated fields were correct, manually reviewing and correcting spelling errors, and comparing population totals with outside agencies in order to establish accuracy.

### B. Duplicates

Because NMCEH coordinated the PIT count over a week-long period, which can lead to a higher amount of duplicated records, the unsheltered surveys were included if there was enough qualitative data provided to de-duplicate the record. To remove duplicates from the completed datasets, NMCEH searched for duplicate unique identifiers within the unsheltered datasets. Within the Sheltered count, HMIS, and comparable database, data is able to automatically remove duplicate records.

## Unsheltered Survey Determinations

Additional determinations were needed to satisfy HUD reporting requirements for populations and subpopulations, the information collected in the unsheltered survey allowed NMCEH to make the following determinations:

### A. Literal Homelessness

Question #2 on the unsheltered survey asked where a person was residing on the night of the count, rather than asking if they are homeless. NMCEH used the answers to determine if the living condition matched HUD's definition of literal homelessness. Persons not experiencing literal homelessness (as defined by HUD) were excluded from the Unsheltered PIT count; if these persons were staying in an Emergency Shelter or Transitional Housing program, they would be included in the sheltered count through our other data collection methods.

### B. Chronically Homeless

Chronically homeless individuals, per HUD's definition, must be homeless and living or residing in "a place not meant for human habitation," or in an emergency shelter continuously for at least one year or on at least four separate occasions in the last three years where the combined length of time homeless in those occasions is at least 12 months, and the individual must have a disabling condition that is expected to be long lasting and impeding their ability to sustain housing independently.<sup>4</sup> NMCEH uses questions 2 and 7 to determine if a person may be experiencing chronic homelessness.

### C. Households Without Children

Households without children included adult singles and couples with no children.

### D. Households with at least one adult and one child

Otherwise known as families, these households currently had at least one adult and one minor.

### E. Households with only children

These households included individual(s) under the age of 18 with no legal guardian or parent.

### F. Parenting Youth

Parenting youth include youth (age 18-24) that have at least one minor in their care and no adults, over the age of 24, in the household.

### G. Unaccompanied Youth and minors

Unaccompanied youth includes youth between (age 18-24) who live without a parent or legal guardian. Unaccompanied minors included children age 17 or younger who live without a parent or legal guardian.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/Defining-Chronically-Homeless-Final-Rule.pdf>

## (4) Albuquerque CoC Results

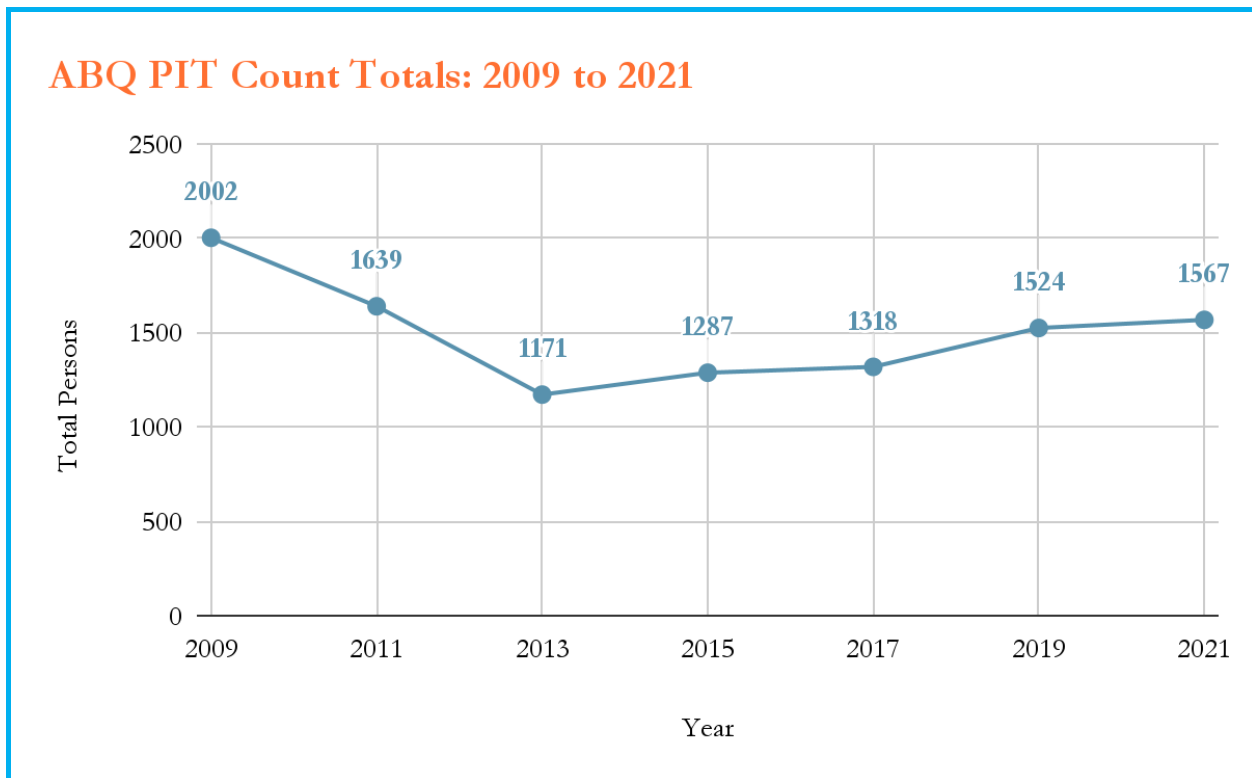
### Overall Numbers

The following data was collected from unsheltered and sheltered people experiencing homelessness and are organized by living situation as captured for January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

**Table 1 - ABQ - All 2021.** The total estimated number of households experiencing homelessness in Albuquerque on January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

	Emergency Shelters	Transitional Housing	Unsheltered	Total
Households with at least one Child	91	32	3	<b>126</b>
Households without children	563	94	351	<b>1008</b>
Households with only Children	10	8	0	<b>18</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>664</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>354</b>	<b>1152</b>

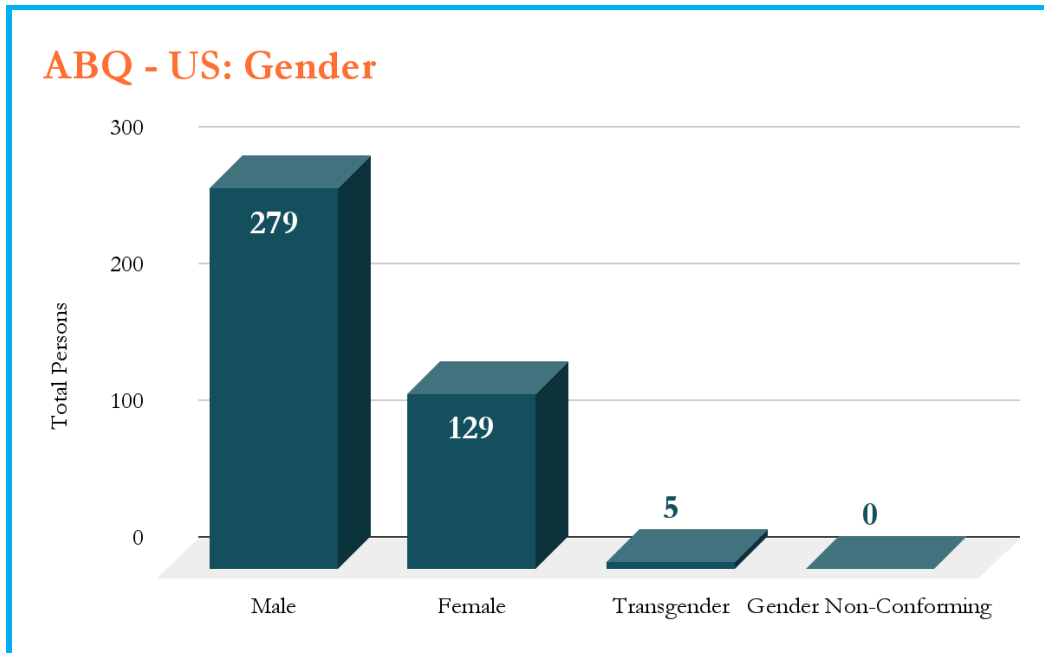
**Figure 1 - US-ABQ All Overtime.** Total estimated number of people counted during the Albuquerque Point-in-Time counts from 2009 - 2021



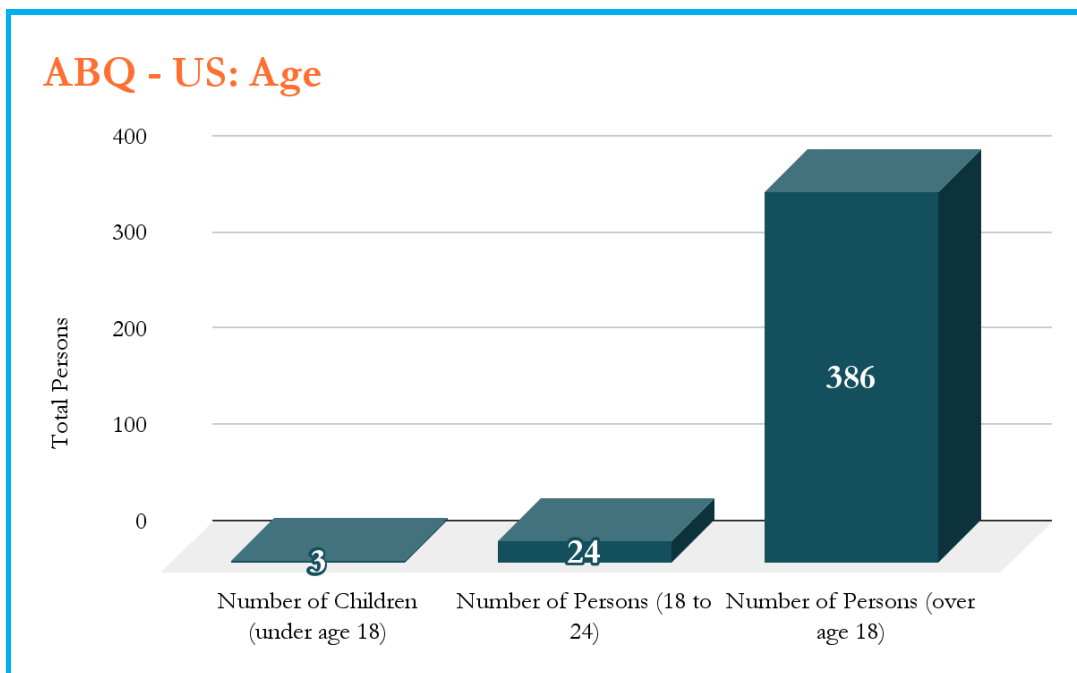
## Unsheltered Data Breakdown

- Total Unsheltered Chronic Homeless - 172 (42%)
- Homeless due to COVID-19 - 80 (21%)
- First-time homeless - 153 (37%)
- Homeless due to Domestic Violence - 47 (12%)
- Number of families - 3
- Number of families fleeing domestic violence: 2 out of 3 (66%)
- Adults with a Serious Mental Illness (SMI) - 103 (25%)
- Adults with Substance Use Disorder - 105 (25%)

**Figure 2 - US-ABQ Gender.** This is the Gender breakdown of data for people residing in an unsheltered location on the night of January 25th.

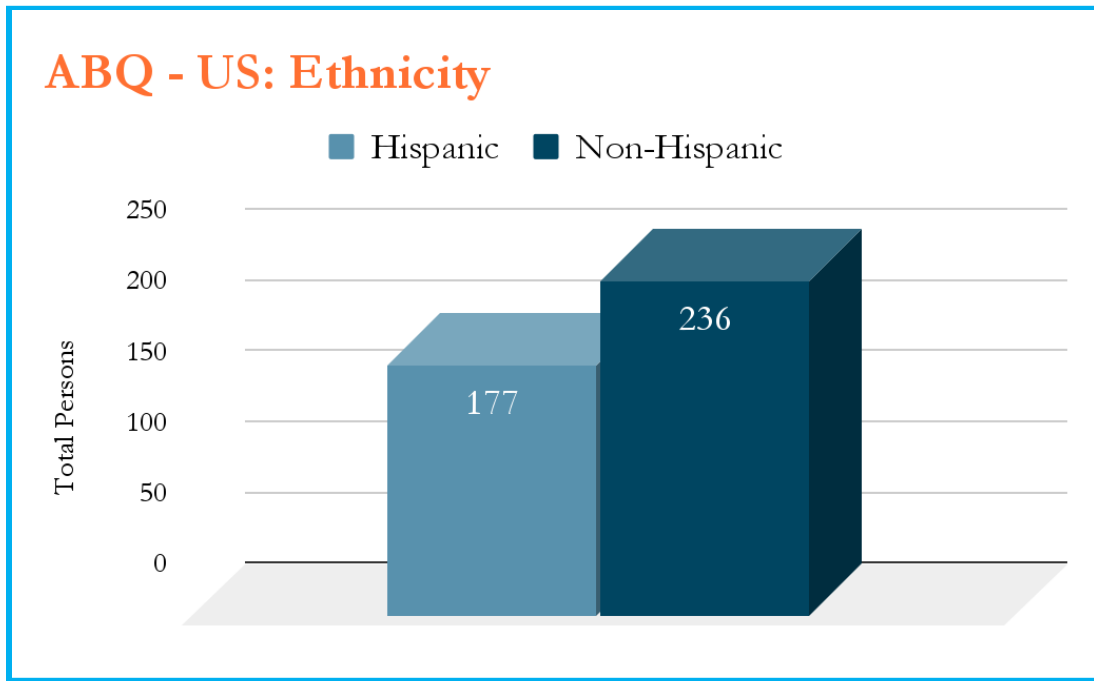


**Figure 3 - US-ABQ Age Range.** This is the Age breakdown of data for people residing in an unsheltered location on the night of January 25th.

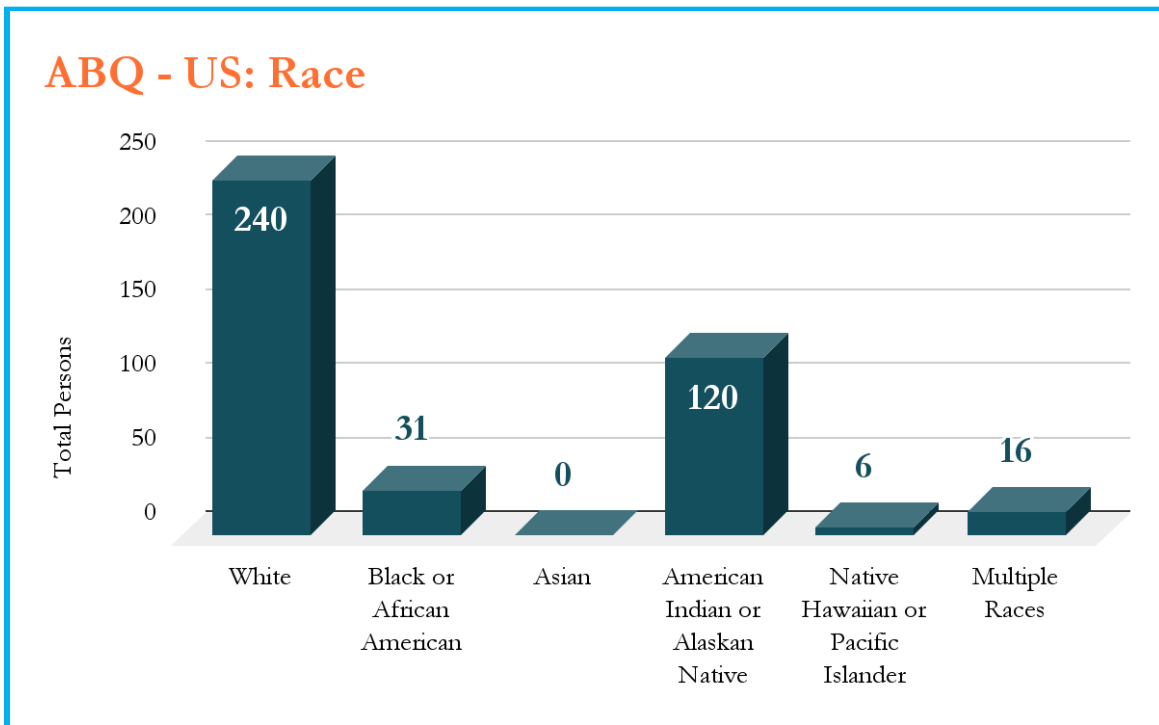




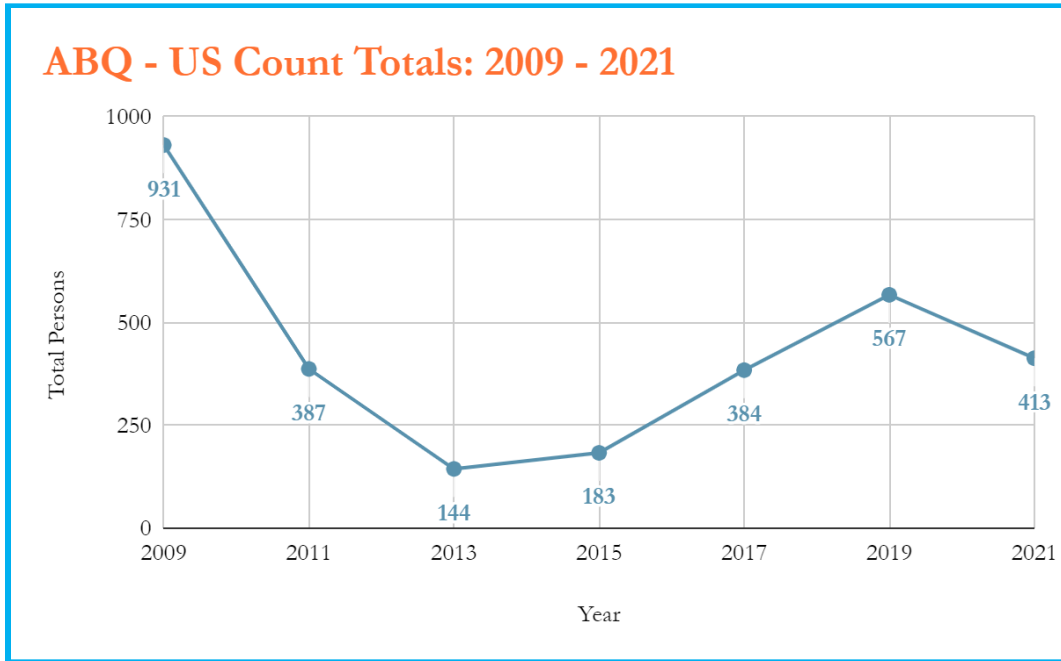
**Figure 4 - US-ABQ Ethnicity.** This is the Ethnicity breakdown of data for people residing in an unsheltered location on the night of January 25th.



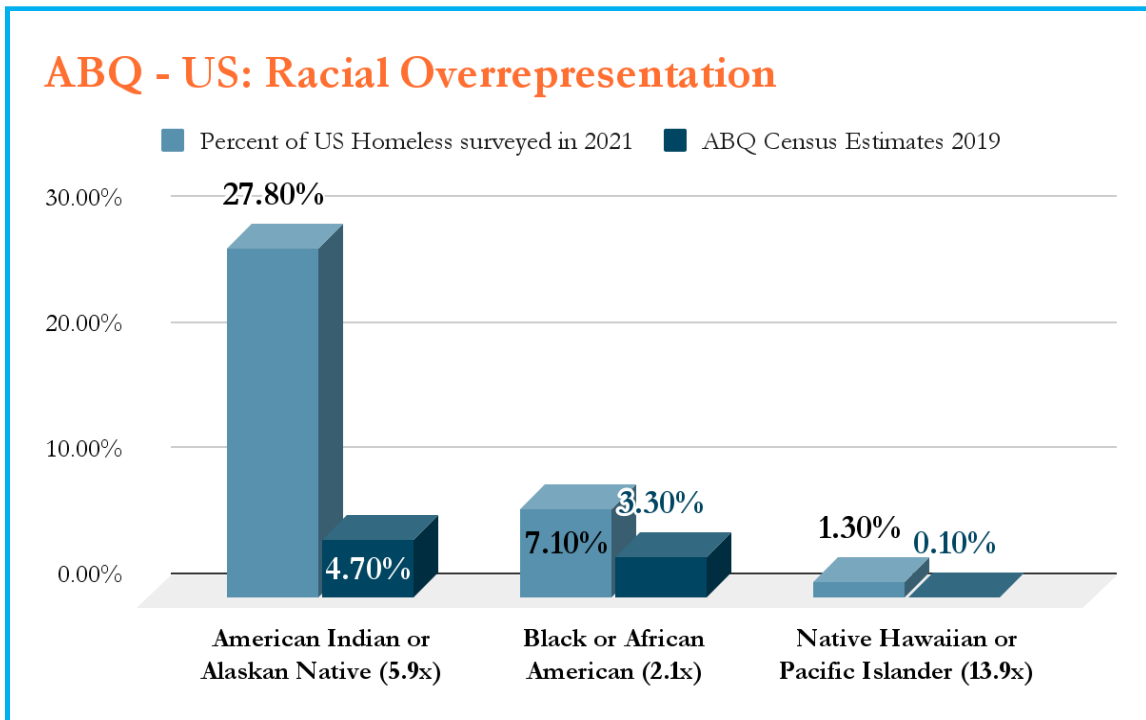
**Figure 5 - US-ABQ Race.** This is the Race breakdown of data for people residing in an unsheltered location on the night of January 25th.



**Figure 6 - US-ABQ Overtime.** Estimated number of people living in an unsheltered living condition in Albuquerque during the PIT Counts 2009-2021.



**Figure 7- US-ABQ Racial Overrepresentation.** Percentages of people surveyed who were living in an unsheltered condition in 2021 compared to 2019 Albuquerque census data.<sup>5</sup>



<sup>5</sup> <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/albuquerquecitynewmexico>

## What you need to know about Albuquerque's 2021 Unsheltered Data

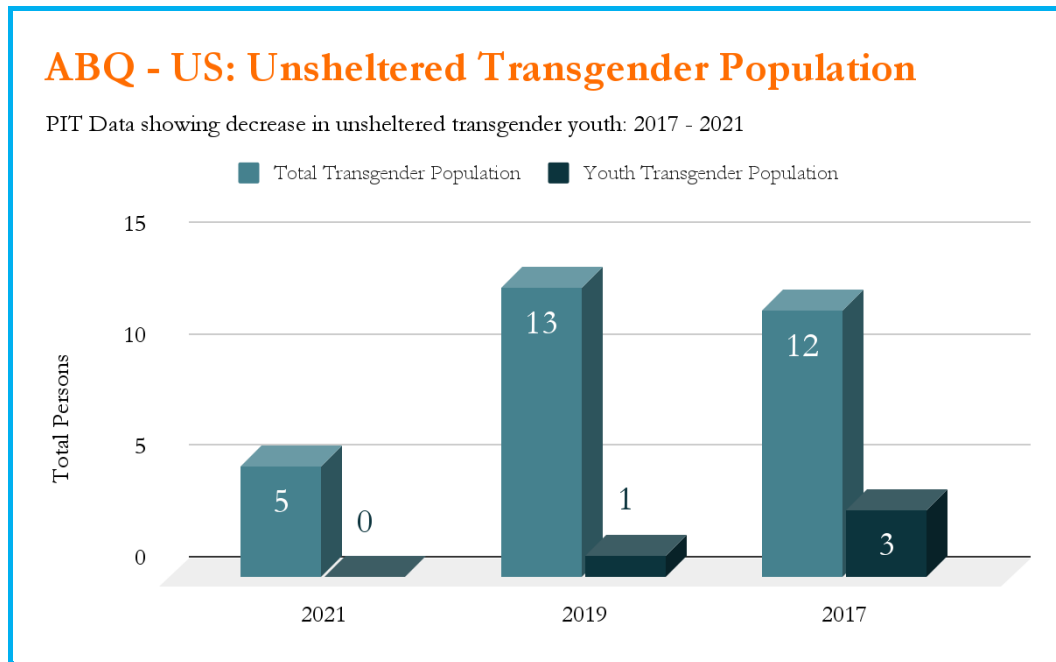
NMCEH used similar methodologies for the Unsheltered 2015, 2017, 2019 and 2021 PIT counts, so comparison of the four different counts is reasonable. In 2021, 413 people reported living in a place not meant for human habitation on the night of January 25th, while this was roughly a 27% decrease from 2019's count where 567 people reported living in a place not meant for human habitation on the night of January 25<sup>th</sup>. This does not mean that there has necessarily been a decrease in the amount of people sleeping in places not meant for human habitation. Due to the restrictions placed on the count by the COVID-19 pandemic from local and Federal regulations, outreach teams could logistically only cover smaller geographic areas for shorter amounts of time. Coupled with ongoing removal of encampments during the pandemic, this created areas of constantly shifting populations which would hamper effective engagement on a limited scale. Also, in an effort to support safe housing of people experiencing homelessness during the pandemic, many shelters were able to add extra beds and with the creation of Wellness Motels, this allowed for more people to be sheltered on the night of the count - contributing to lower numbers.

Due to the local and Federal restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 Pandemic, PIT Planning in Albuquerque moved to aligning times and locations of outreach with individual street teams, any ongoing locations, and targeting areas where they had ongoing engagement or had high levels of engagement. In order to try to cover the greatest amount of area in the City of Albuquerque, the outreach lasted from January 26 - 29. There was a severe winter storm the week of the count, and it's drastic drop in temperatures impacted both teams and unsheltered persons experiencing homelessness, some teams self-reported that this impacted their ability to find and connect with individuals. Due to the restrictions of the pandemic, street teams signed up for geographic areas by days and times they were available in order to reduce the likelihood of duplication. Despite the noted increase in knowledge within the Albuquerque CoC about where people experiencing homelessness are more likely to be residing or accessing services, lower numbers of persons experiencing unsheltered homelessness were reported than in 2019. The Unsheltered PIT counts of 2017 and 2019 utilized only staff trained in street outreach to conduct outreach activities and volunteers at site-based locations. Due to the COVID-19 restrictions, community volunteers were not used, rather staff at day services, existing street outreach staff and agency staff who conduct outreach were utilized. This lowered the number of available surveyors, and limited the count geographically.

## Other Findings of Note

### 1. Transgender Representation

Five people surveyed in 2021 identified as transgender. While this number accounts for a relatively low population percentage (1.21% of total people surveyed), there are still some important trends to note.



The number of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness identifying as transgender has steadily decreased since 2017 from 3.13% down to 1.21% in 2021. This period also saw a significant decrease in the number of youth aged 18-24 in this population, from 25% of people identifying as transgender experiencing unsheltered homelessness in 2017 down to 0 persons in 2021. It is possible that community efforts to address the unique challenges of unsheltered LGBTQIA youth may have had a positive effect on transgendered persons experiencing unsheltered homelessness.

Another trend identified in 2021 shows that of the five persons identifying as transgender, two report that their episode of homelessness is the result of fleeing domestic violence, accounting for 40% of the responding population. This finding may indicate a closer look at the correlation of interpersonal relationship violence and homelessness for people identifying as transgender.

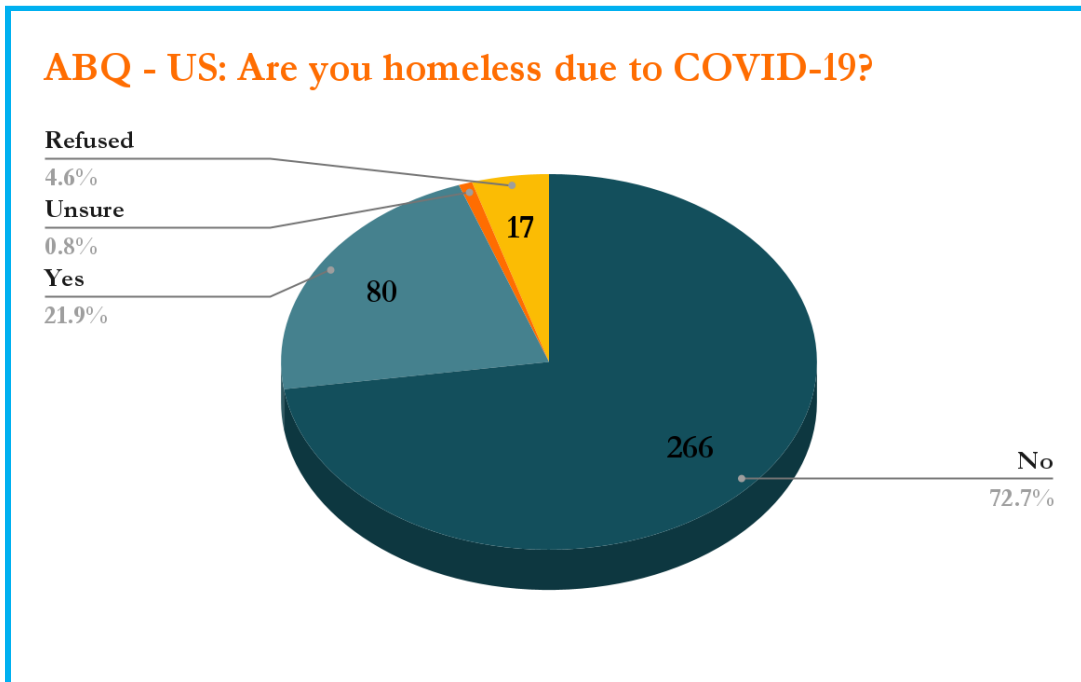
### 2. COVID-19 and Unsheltered Homelessness

An additional question was added to the 2021 unsheltered survey to provide data on the impact of COVID-19 on the inflow of people experiencing homelessness in the city of Albuquerque. The majority of respondents (266 total, 72.7%) reported that COVID-19 was not a cause of their current episode of homelessness. Only 80 people answered “yes”, accounting for 21.9% of responses collected.

It is important to remember that the Unsheltered PIT Count does not provide a complete picture of people in our community. Not everyone agrees to participate in the survey, and it is not likely that we were able to locate everyone staying outside during

street outreach activities. Even with these limitations, the PIT Count provides important data for our community that can be used to develop effective strategies for ending homelessness in Albuquerque.

**Figure 8 - US-ABQ COVID-19 Responses.** This is the breakdown of responses to this question collected during the 2021 unsheltered PIT count.

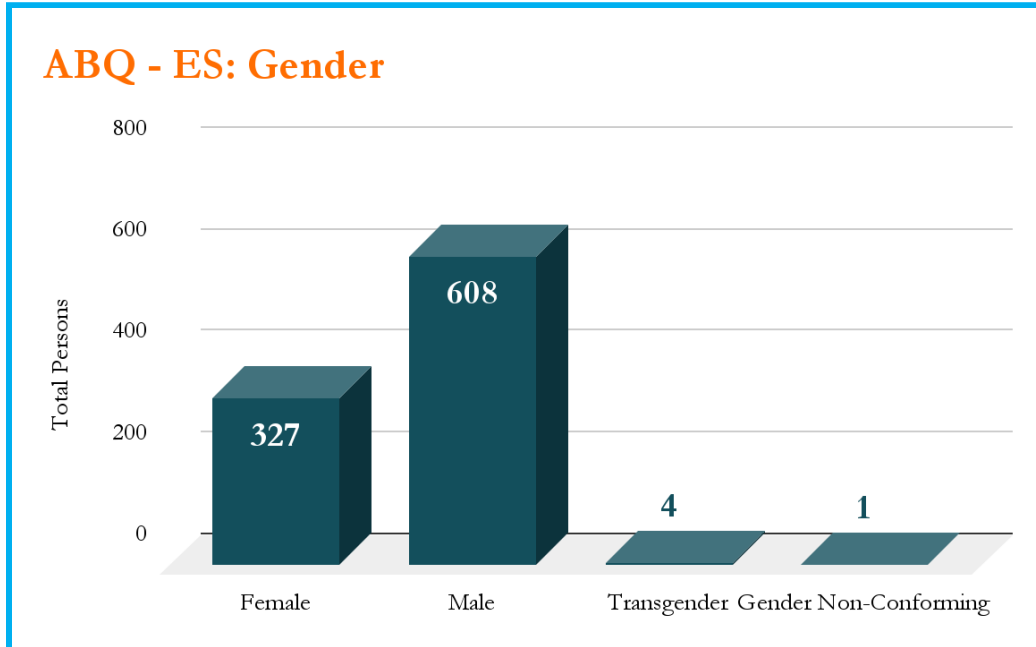


## Albuquerque Sheltered Data Breakdown - Emergency Shelter

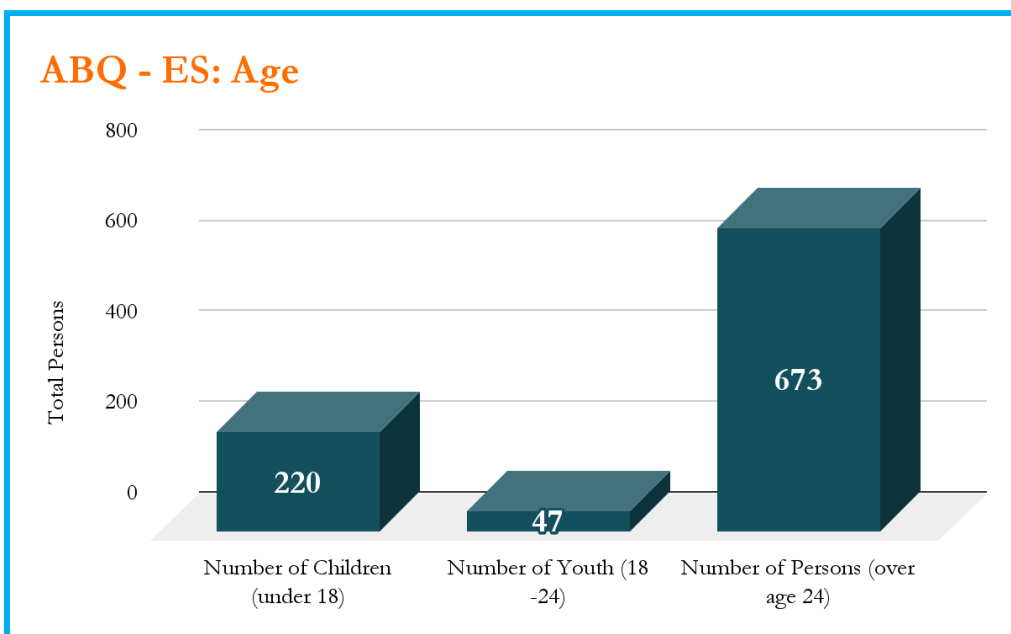
Of the data collected from Emergency Shelters:

- 163 (17%) identified as American Indian or Alaskan Native
- 364 (39%) identified as chronically homeless
- 563 (85%) identified as households without children (singles)
- Adults with a Serious Mental Illness (SMI) - 253 (35%)
- Adults with Substance Use Disorder - 155 (21%)
- 73 adults (11%) identified as fleeing domestic violence

**Figure 9 - ES -ABQ Gender.** This is the Gender breakdown of data for people residing in an emergency shelter on the night of January 25th.

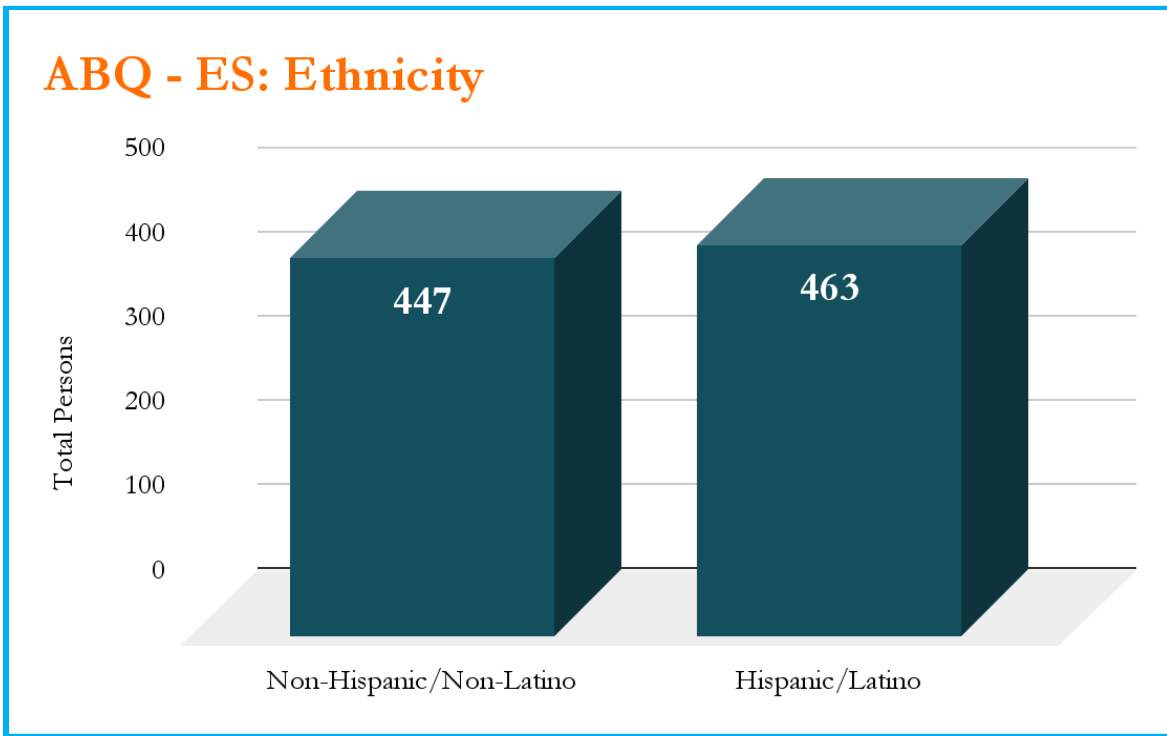


**Figure 10 - ES-ABQ Age Range.** This is the Age breakdown of data for people residing in an emergency shelter on the night of January 25th.

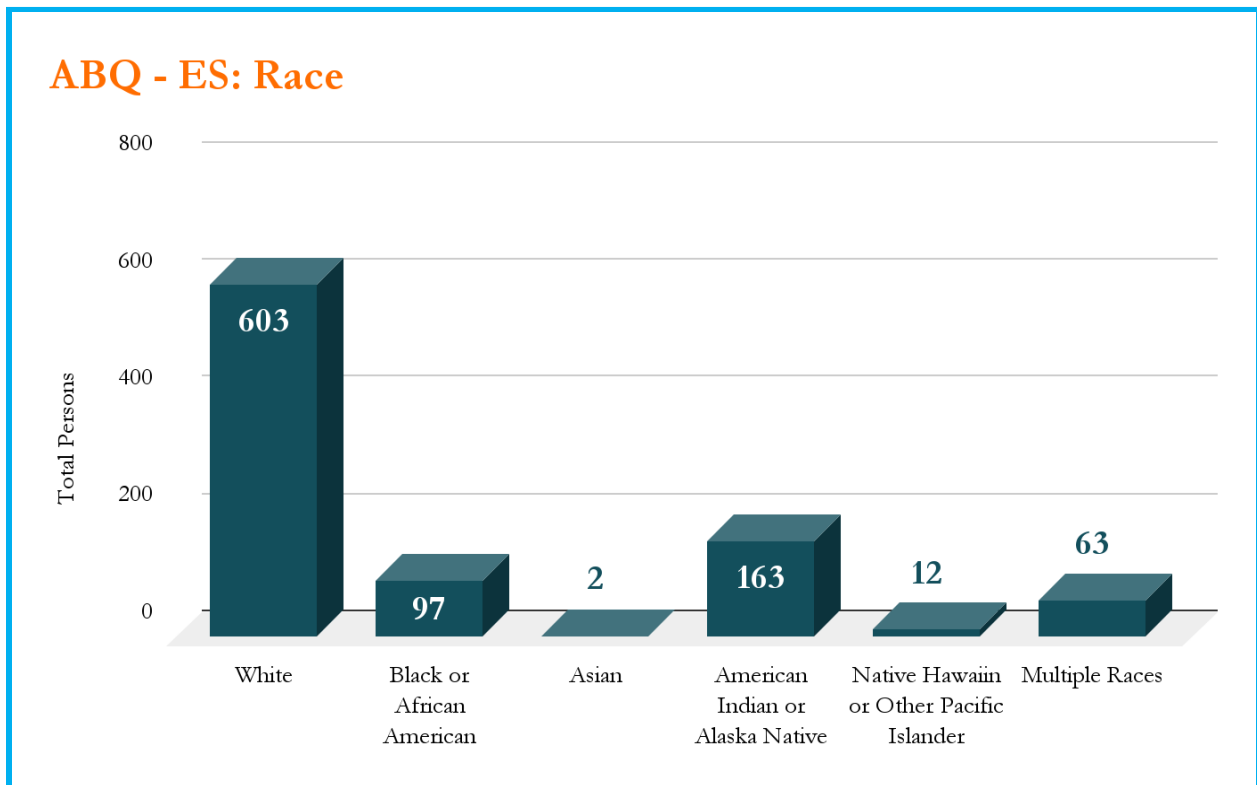




**Figure 11 - ES-ABQ Ethnicity.** This is the Ethnicity breakdown of data for people residing in an emergency shelter on the night of January 25th.



**Figure 12 - ES-ABQ Race.** This is the Race breakdown of data for people residing in an emergency shelter on the night of January 25th.

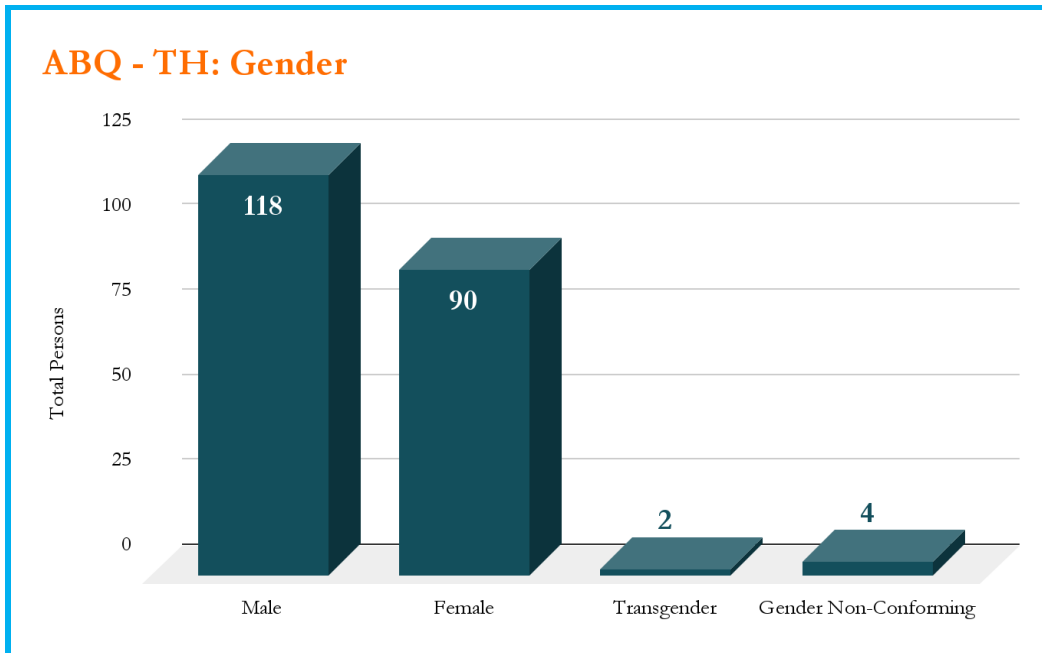


## Albuquerque Sheltered Data Breakdown - Transitional Housing

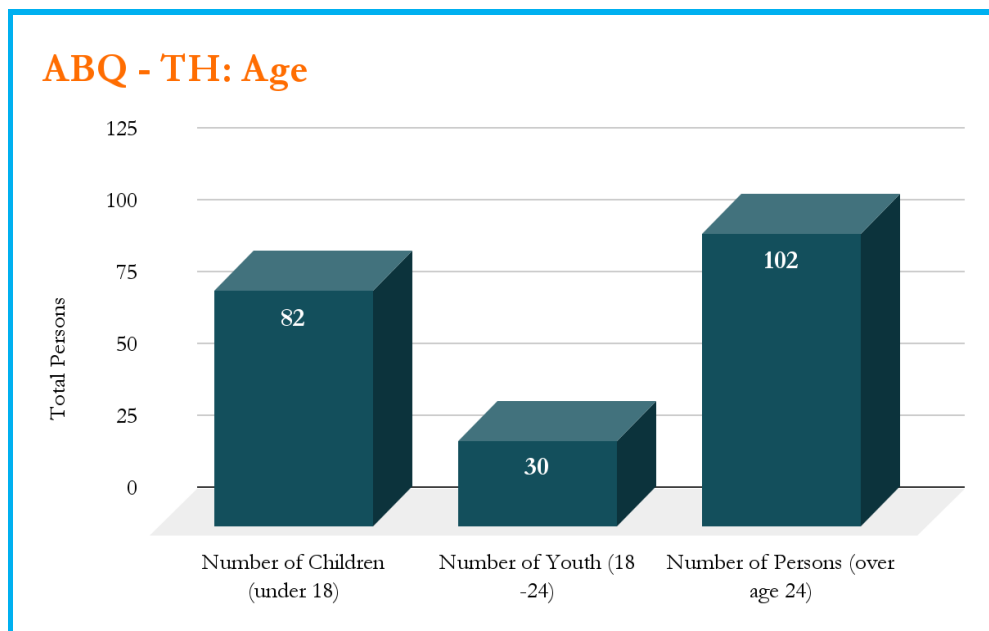
Of the data collected from Transitional Housing Programs:

- 44 (20%) identified as American Indian or Alaskan Native
- 94 (70%) identified as households without children (singles)
- Adults with a Serious Mental Illness (SMI) - 25 (19%)
- Adults with Substance Use Disorder - 62 (47%)
- 11 (8%) identified as fleeing domestic violence

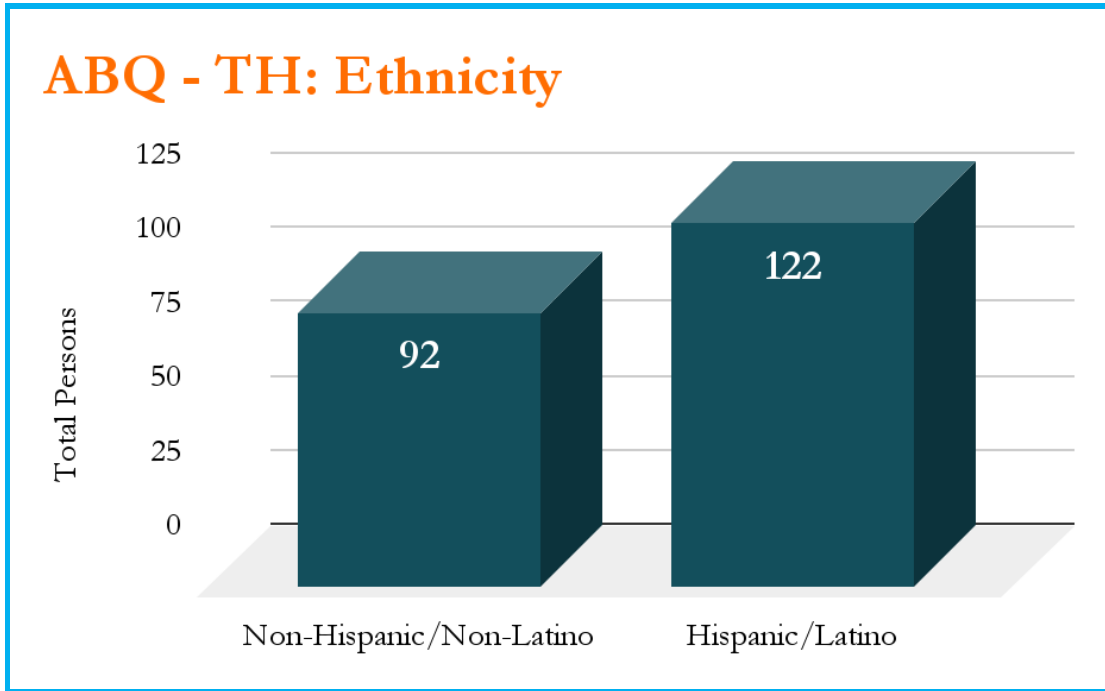
**Figure 14 - TH -ABQ Gender.** This is the Gender breakdown of data for people residing in transitional housing on the night of January 25th.



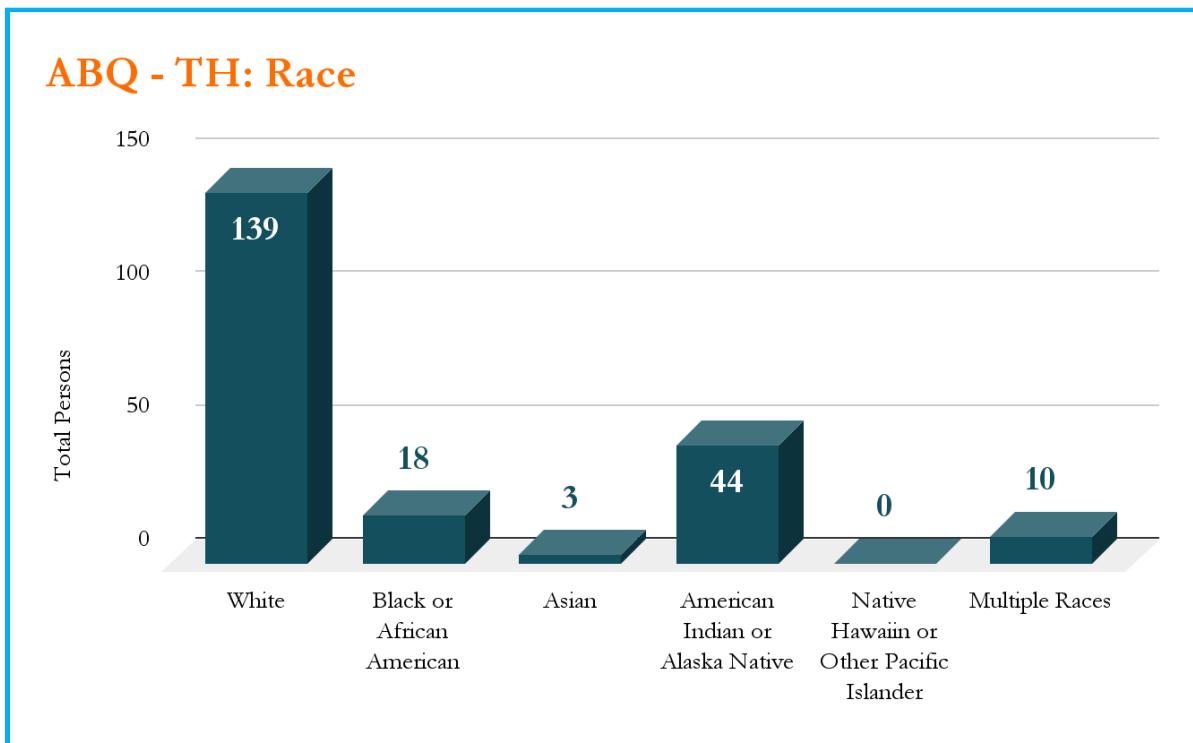
**Figure 15 - TH -ABQ Age.** This is the age breakdown of data for people residing in transitional housing on the night of January 25th.



**Figure 16 - TH -ABQ Ethnicity.** This is the ethnicity breakdown of data for people residing in transitional housing on the night of January 25th.

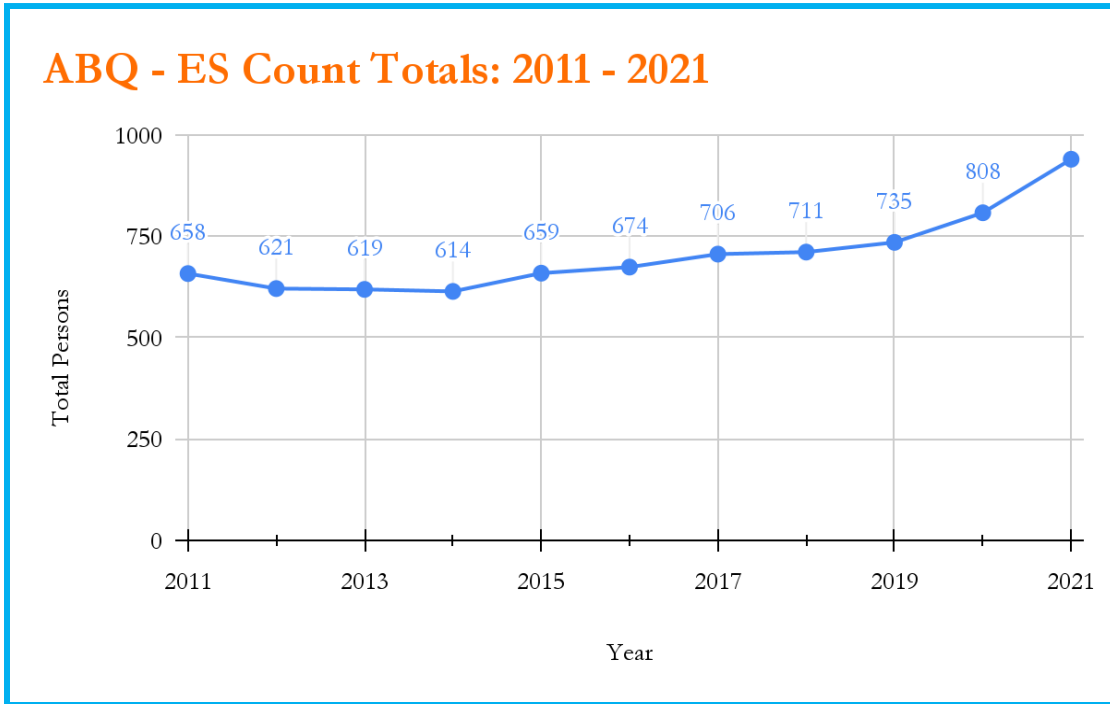


**Figure 17 - TH -ABQ Race.** This is the race breakdown of data for people residing in transitional housing on the night of January 25th.

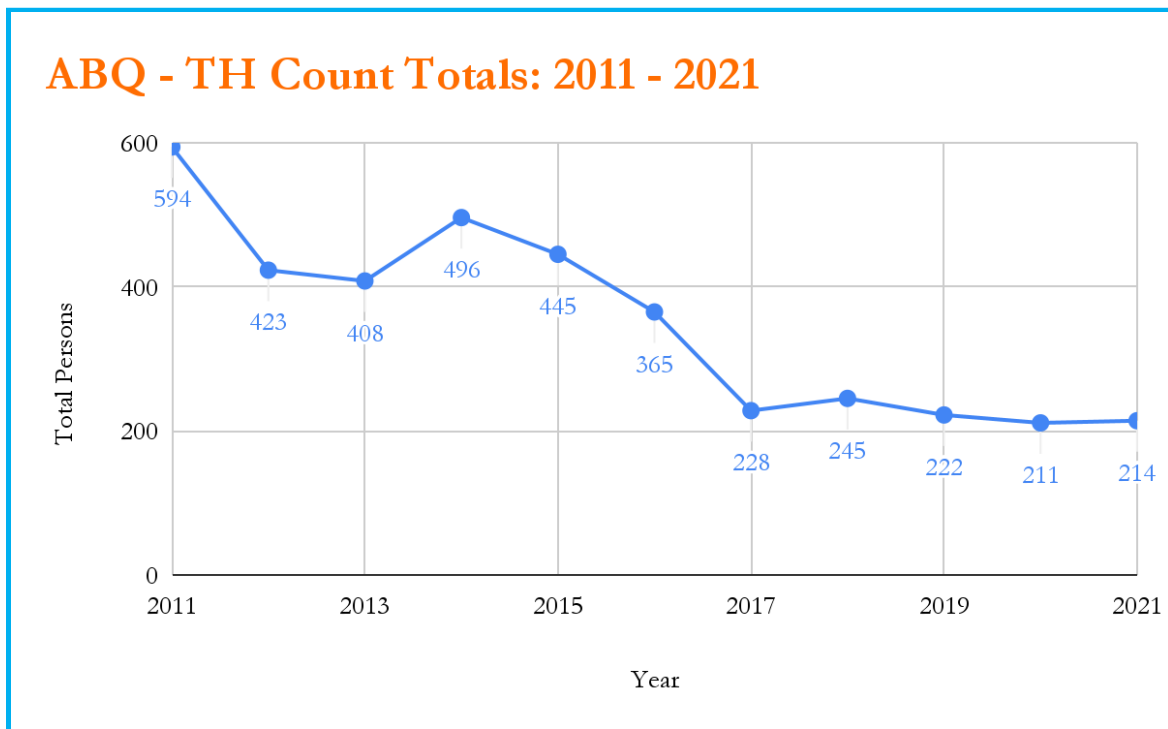


## Albuquerque Sheltered Count Totals Overtime

**Figure 18 - ES -ABQ Overtime.** Estimated number of people residing in an emergency shelter in Albuquerque during the PIT Counts 2009-2021.



**Figure 19 - TH -ABQ Overtime.** Estimated number of people residing in transitional housing in Albuquerque during the PIT Counts 2009-2021.



## What you need to know about Albuquerque's 2021 Sheltered data

### Emergency Shelter

This data only encompasses Emergency Shelters that are within the Albuquerque city limits. Emergency Shelters that are physically located outside of the city limits are considered part of the Balance of State CoC and will be included in the next section of this report.

NMCEH's methodology for aggregating Emergency Shelter data has not changed much over the years, therefore comparison of the different counts is practical. In 2021, we recorded 940 people who were residing in Emergency Shelters on the night of January 25<sup>th</sup>. This is an increase of ~16% from the 808 persons in the 2020 Sheltered PIT count. This increase of persons in Emergency Shelters aligns with Albuquerque's increased number of shelter beds and the inclusion of Wellness Motels during the COVID-19 pandemic..

Based on the aggregated data, we see that the total number of people that identified as American Indian or Alaskan Native is proportionately less than those residing in an unsheltered situation. American Indians or Alaskan Natives make up 17% of persons residing in shelters and 29% of persons who were unsheltered. We see people that identify as White make up roughly 603 (64%) of all people residing in emergency shelters, and is larger than those residing in an unsheltered situation, 240 (58%).

Also, we see that adults that reported a mental illness decreased among people residing in emergency shelters compared to unsheltered. Nearly twice as many people that were living in an unsheltered situation reported having a mental illness, wherein 103 (25.1%) unsheltered reported and 253 (35.1%) for people residing in shelters. Additionally, higher numbers of unsheltered persons experiencing homelessness reported substance abuse, as 105 (25.6%) identified as having substance abuse issues compared to 155 (21.5%) persons in Emergency Shelters.

The sheltered PIT count does rely heavily on accurate and timely data from Emergency Shelters. Data collected does not provide an exact number, but rather a snapshot of people in our community. Even with these limitations, the sheltered PIT Count provides important data for our community that can be used to develop effective strategies for ending homelessness in Albuquerque.

### Transitional Housing

Transitional housing in Albuquerque is unique and largely targeted to certain subpopulations, including, and not limited to: Veterans, people that have substance abuse and mental illness, or survivors of domestic violence. We see that the demographic breakdown reflects the program constructions. As with Emergency Shelters, the Transitional Housing PIT count includes Transitional Housing programs that are outside of the Albuquerque City limits. Transitional Housing programs that are physically located within the Albuquerque City limits are part of the Albuquerque CoC and were included in an earlier section of this report.

NMCEH's methodology for aggregating Transitional Housing data has not changed much over the years, therefore comparison of the different counts is practical. In 2021, we recorded 214 people who were residing in a Transitional Housing on the night of January 25<sup>th</sup>. This is an increase of 1.4% from the 2020 Sheltered PIT count of 211 persons residing in TH.

## (5) Results - Balance of State CoC

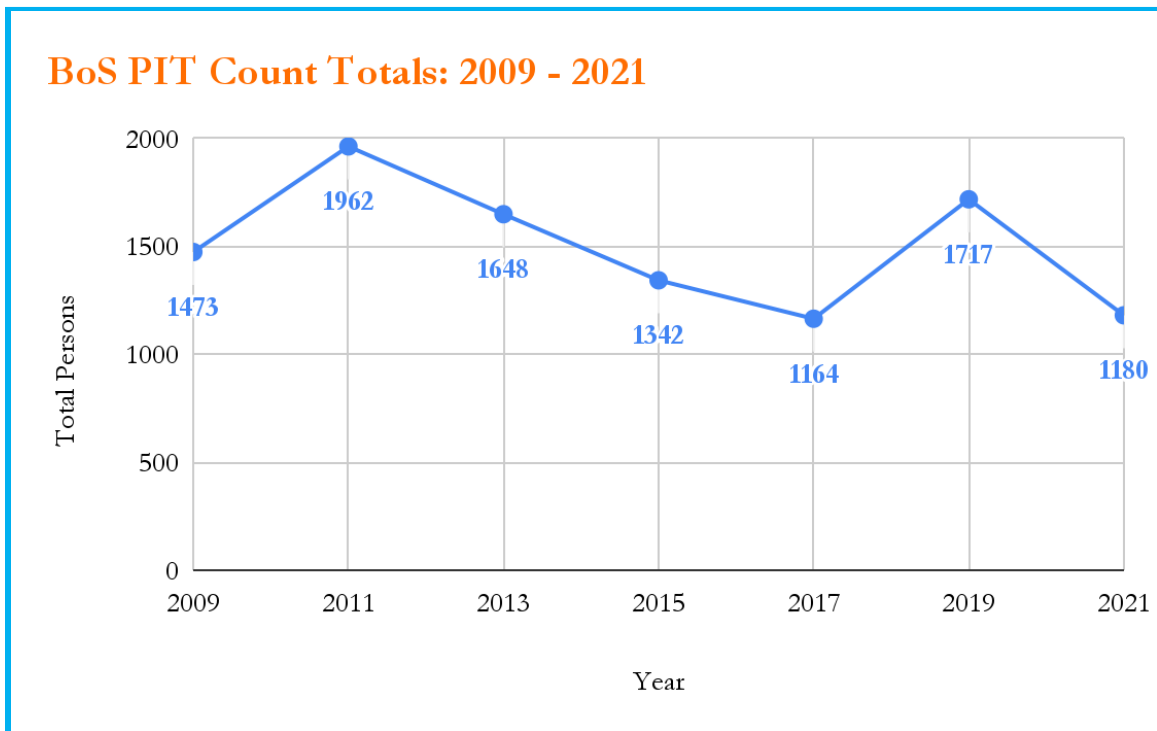
### Overall Numbers

The following data was collected from unsheltered and sheltered people experiencing homelessness and are organized by the living situation as captured for January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

**Table 2.** The total estimated number of households experiencing homelessness in Balance of State on January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

	Emergency Shelters	Transitional Housing	Unsheltered	Total
Households with at least one Child	65	25	12	102
Households without children	465	28	293	786
Households with only Children	15	2	0	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>545</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>905</b>

**Figure 19 - US-BoS All Overtime.** Total estimated number of people counted during the Balance of State Point-in-Time counts from 2009 - 2021.

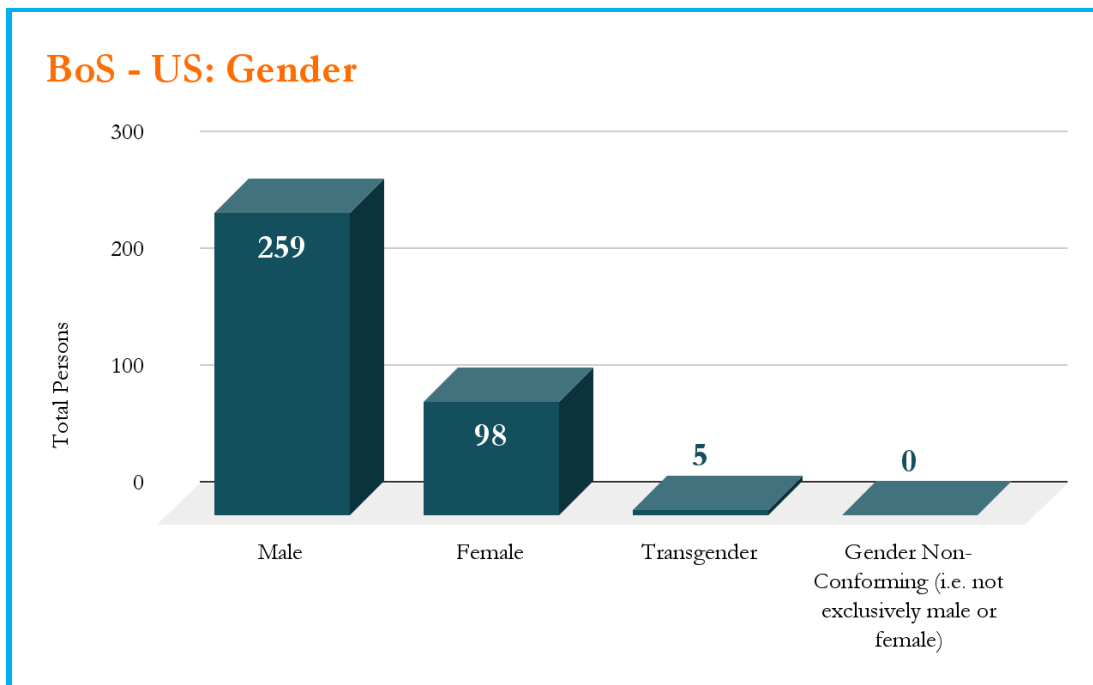




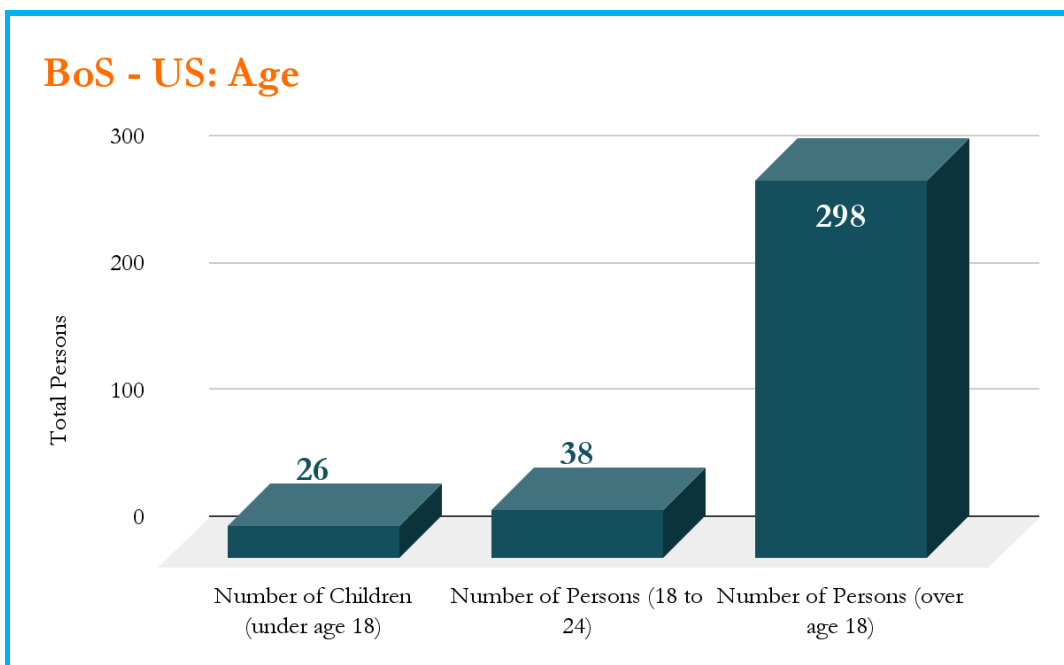
## Unsheltered Data Breakdown

- Total Unsheltered Chronic Homeless - 185 (51%)
- Homeless due to COVID-19 - 37 (12%)
- First-time homeless - 75 (21%)
- Homeless due to Domestic Violence - 31 (8%)
- Number of families - 12
- 2 out of the 12 families were fleeing DV (16%)
- Adults with a Serious Mental Illness (SMI) - 132 (39%)
- Adults with Substance Use Disorder - 236 (70%)

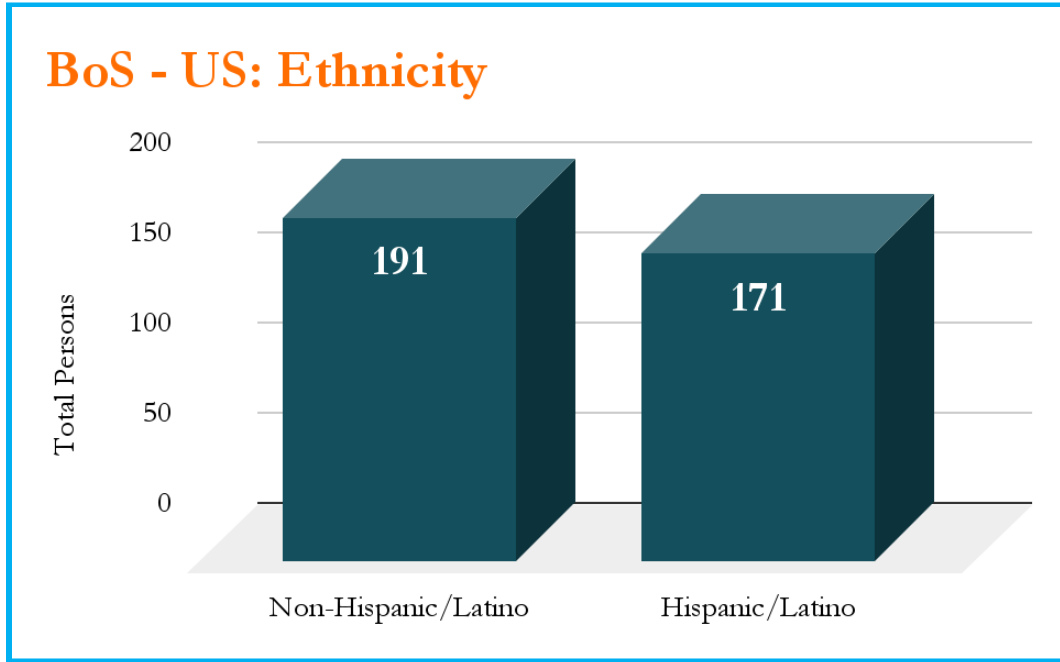
**Figure 20 - US-BoS Gender.** This is the Gender breakdown of data for people residing in an unsheltered location on the night of January 25th.



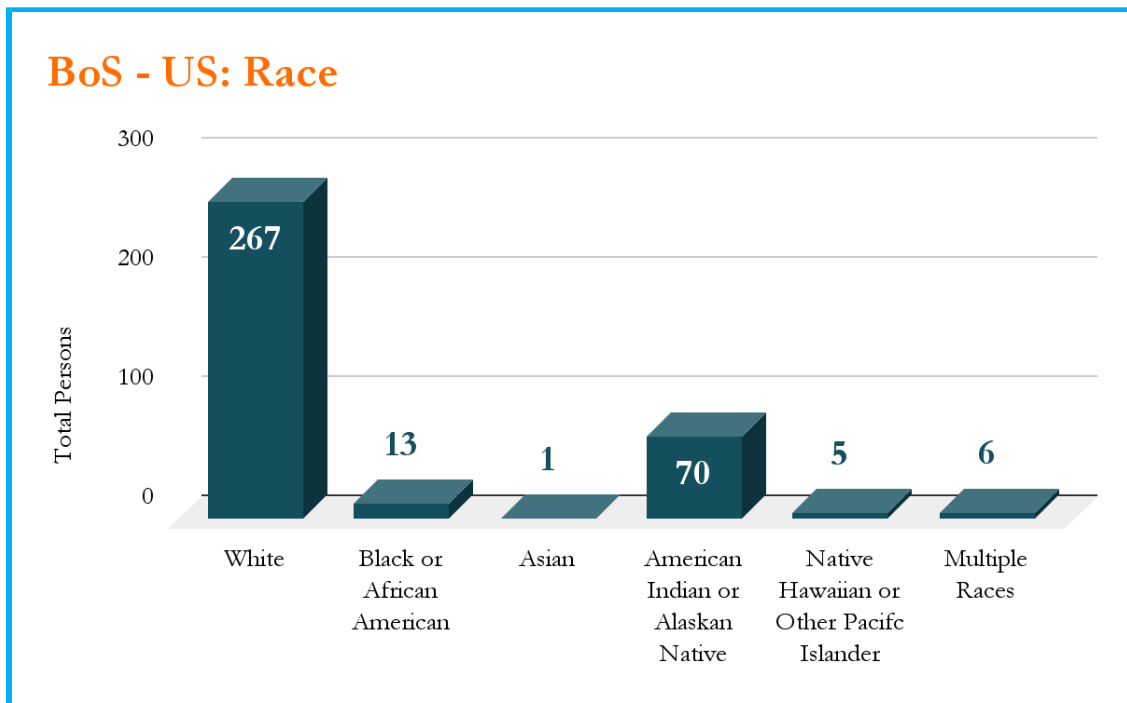
**Figure 21 - US-BoS Age.** This is the Age breakdown of data for people residing in an unsheltered location on the night of January 25th.



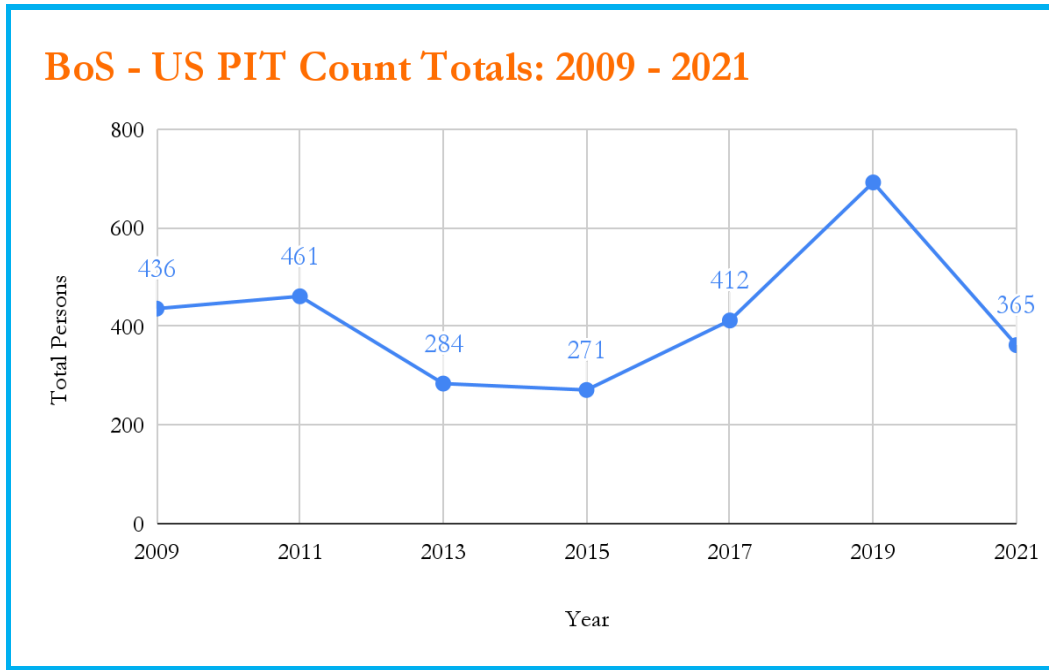
**Figure 21 - US-BoS Ethnicity.** This is the Ethnicity breakdown of data for people residing in an unsheltered location on the night of January 25th.



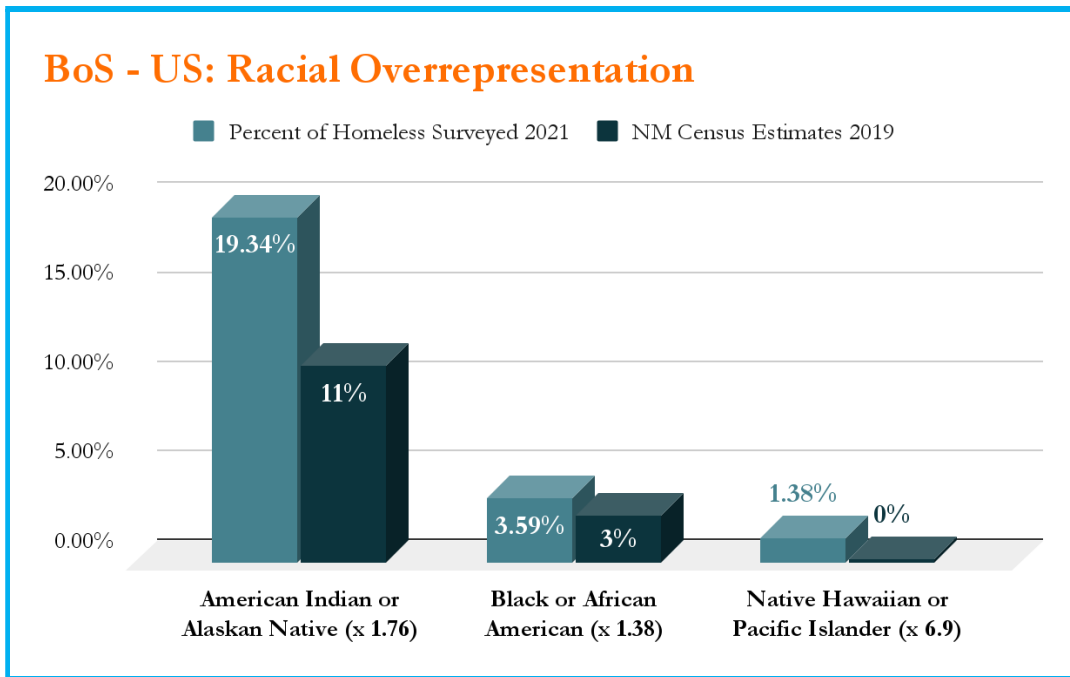
**Figure 23 - US-BoS Race.** This is the Race breakdown of data for people residing in an unsheltered location on the night of January 25th.



**Figure 24 - US-BoS Overtime.** Estimated number of people living in an unsheltered living condition in the Balance of State during the PIT Counts 2009-2021.



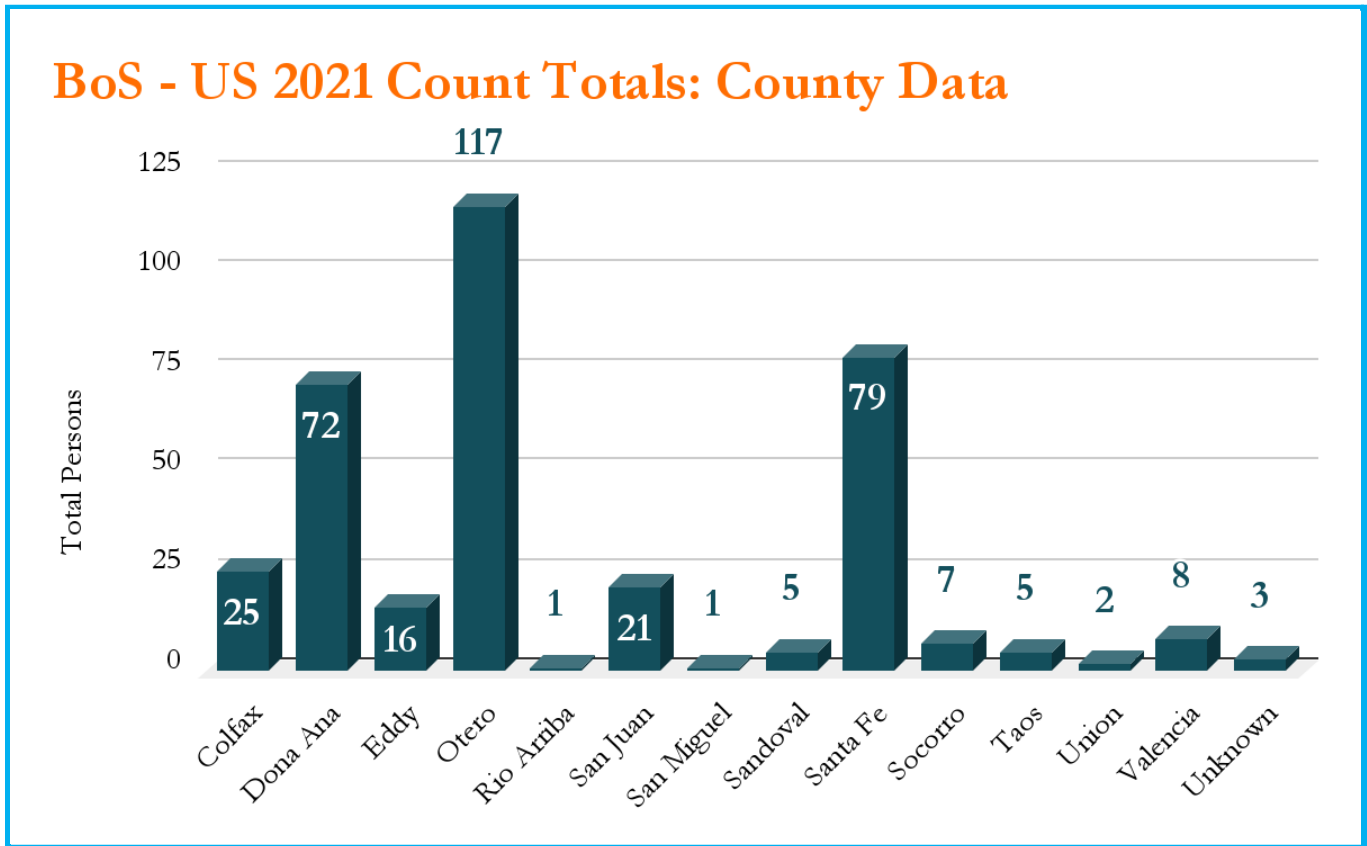
**Figure 25- US-BoS Racial Overrepresentation.** Percentages of people surveyed who were living in an unsheltered condition in 2021 compared to 2019 NM State census data.<sup>6</sup>



<sup>6</sup> <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/NM>

## Balance of State Unsheltered Data Breakdown - by County

Figure 26 - US-BoS County Totals. Number of persons surveyed during the 2021 PIT count by county.



## What you need to know about the 2021 BoS Unsheltered data

In 2021, 365 people reported living in a place not meant for human habitation on the night of January 25th, while this was a marked decrease (roughly 47.7%) from 2019's count where 692 people reported living in a place not meant for human habitation on the night of January 25<sup>th</sup>. This does not mean that there has necessarily been a decrease in the amount of people sleeping in places not meant for human habitation. Due to the restrictions placed on the count by the COVID-19 pandemic from local and Federal regulations, outreach teams could logistically only cover smaller geographic areas for shorter amounts of time.

As the county data illustrates (Figure 25), only 14 out of 33 total counties in New Mexico were accounted for in 2021, with some counties, such as Otero, far weighing the rest. Again, this data should not be interpreted to indicate that there are more people experiencing unsheltered homelessness in one county than another, as significant shifts in count methodology due to COVID-19 restrictions and county-level community engagement. Seven counties decreased by 100% from 2019 in the 2021 count, with an additional 9 counties reporting decreases averaging around ~70%. Only four counties reported increases, most notably Otero county by 117, or 100% up from 2019's count of zero. Some counties that formerly participated could not participate in 2021, whereas others who had not participated before were able to join in supporting the 2021 count.

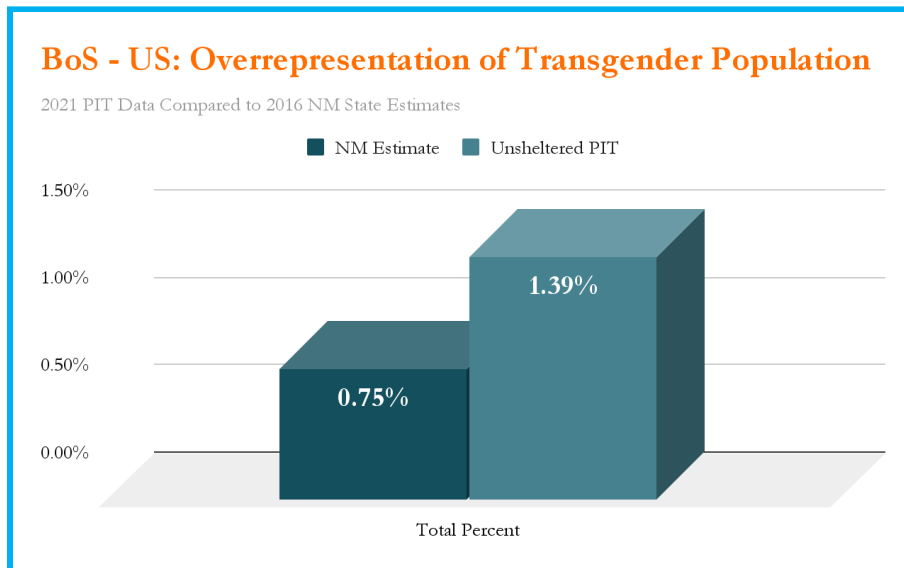
Due to the local and Federal restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 Pandemic, PIT Planning in the Balance of State focused on engaging existing staff at community agencies serving individuals experiencing homelessness, as opposed to recruiting volunteers. This lowered the number of available surveyors, and limited the count geographically. Additionally, there was a severe winter storm the week of the count, and its drastic drop in temperatures impacted both teams and unsheltered persons experiencing homelessness, some teams self-reported that this impacted their ability to find and connect with individuals.

The advent of wellness hotels, alternatives to congregate shelters in response to COVID-19, may also account for the decreased count. NMCEH made attempts during PIT planning to identify and include all wellness hotels across the state in our sheltered count, but recognizes that many communities were not accounted for. It is reasonable to believe that unaccounted wellness hotels provided shelter to people who might otherwise have experienced unsheltered homelessness the night of the count, resulting in lower numbers.

## Other Findings of Note

### 1. Transgender Representation

**Figure 27 - US-BoS Transgender Overrepresentation.** Percentage of persons identifying as transgender in 2021 PIT data compared to 2016 NM State estimates<sup>7</sup>



An area of overrepresentation found in the 2021 BoS PIT illustrates persons identifying as transgender among unsheltered persons experiencing homelessness account for nearly double the estimates of New Mexico’s total transgender identifying population. 5 people identified as transgender, with 3 out of those 5 being youth. The other two persons reported being in their 40’s and the other in their late 70’s, indicating that unsheltered homelessness disproportionately effects people identifying as transgender across all life stages.

Recent youth housing initiatives, such as the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project (YHDP) in northern New Mexico, have identified LGBTQIA youth as a priority population and has been successful in housing many transgender identifying youth. However, numbers suggest that more resources could help older adults as well.

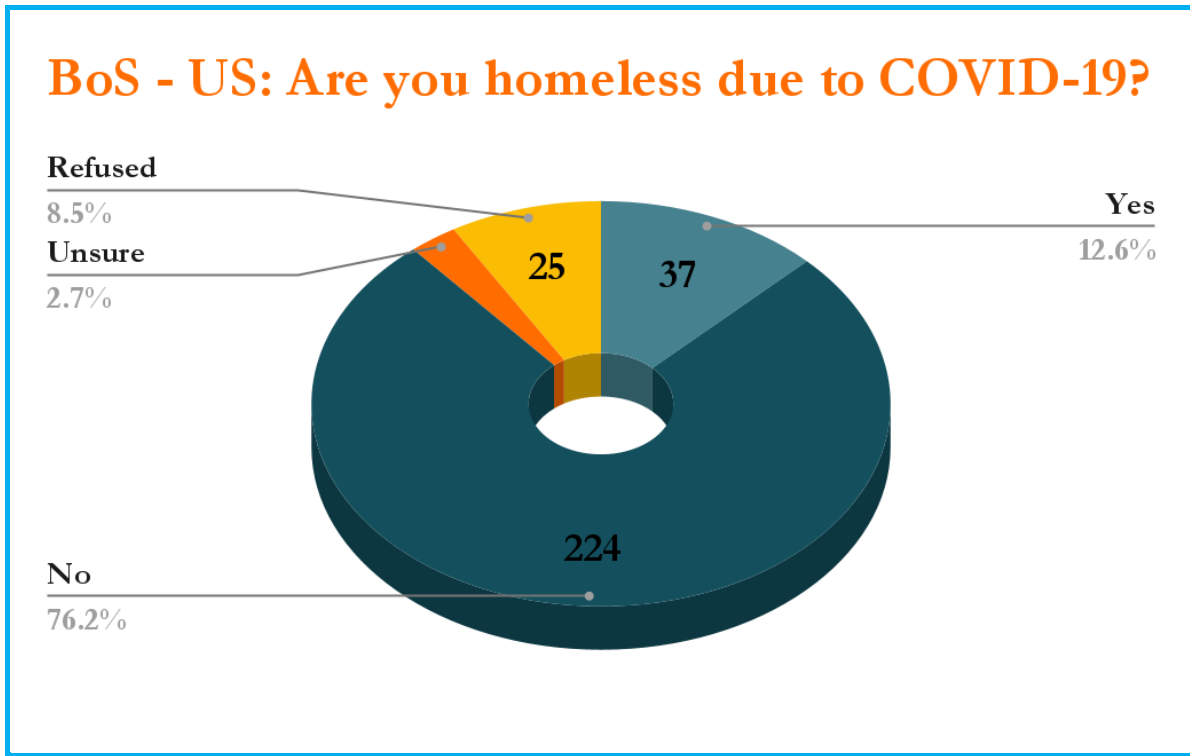
### 2. COVID-19 and Unsheltered Homelessness

An additional question was added to the 2021 unsheltered survey to provide data on the impact of COVID-19 on the inflow of people experiencing homelessness into the Balance of State. The majority of respondents (224 total, 76.2%) reported that COVID-19 was not a cause of their current episode of homelessness. Only 37 people answered “yes”, accounting for 12.6% of responses collected.

<sup>7</sup> Source: <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Trans-Adults-US-Aug-2016.pdf>



**Figure 28 - US-BoS COVID-19 and Unsheltered Homelessness.** Responses to the question “Are you homeless due to COVID-19” collected in the Balance of State 2021 unsheltered PIT survey.

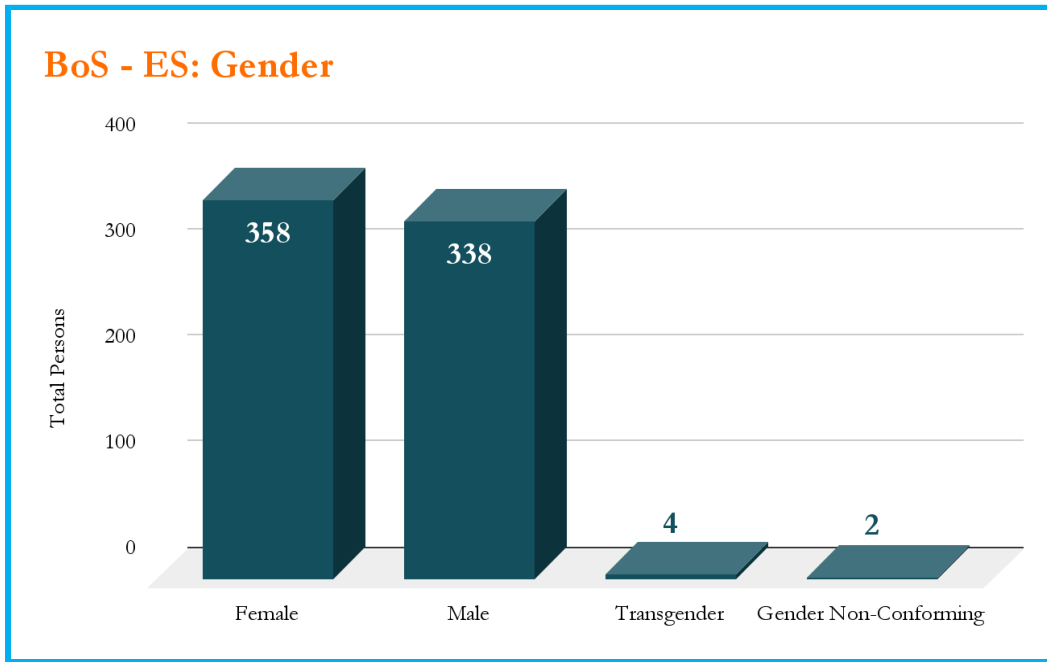


## Balance of State Sheltered Data Breakdown - Emergency Shelter

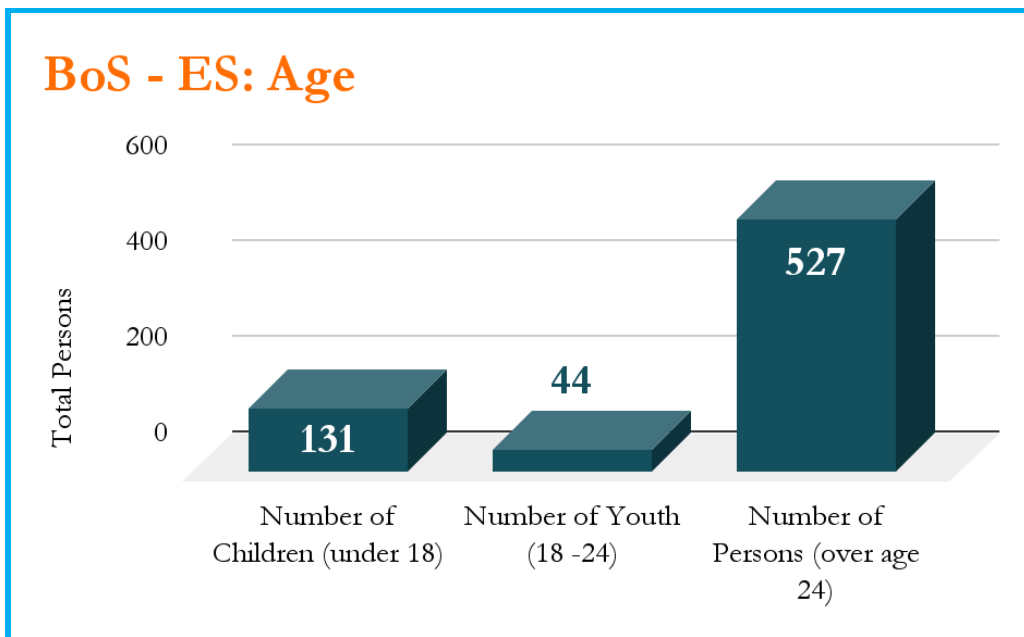
Of the data collected from Emergency Shelters:

- 253 (36%) identified as American Indian or Alaskan Native
- 67 (9%) identified as chronically homeless
- 465 (85%) identified as households without children (singles)
- Adults with a Serious Mental Illness (SMI) - 119 (20%)
- Adults with Substance Use Disorder - 226 (40%)
- 103 (15%) identified as fleeing domestic violence

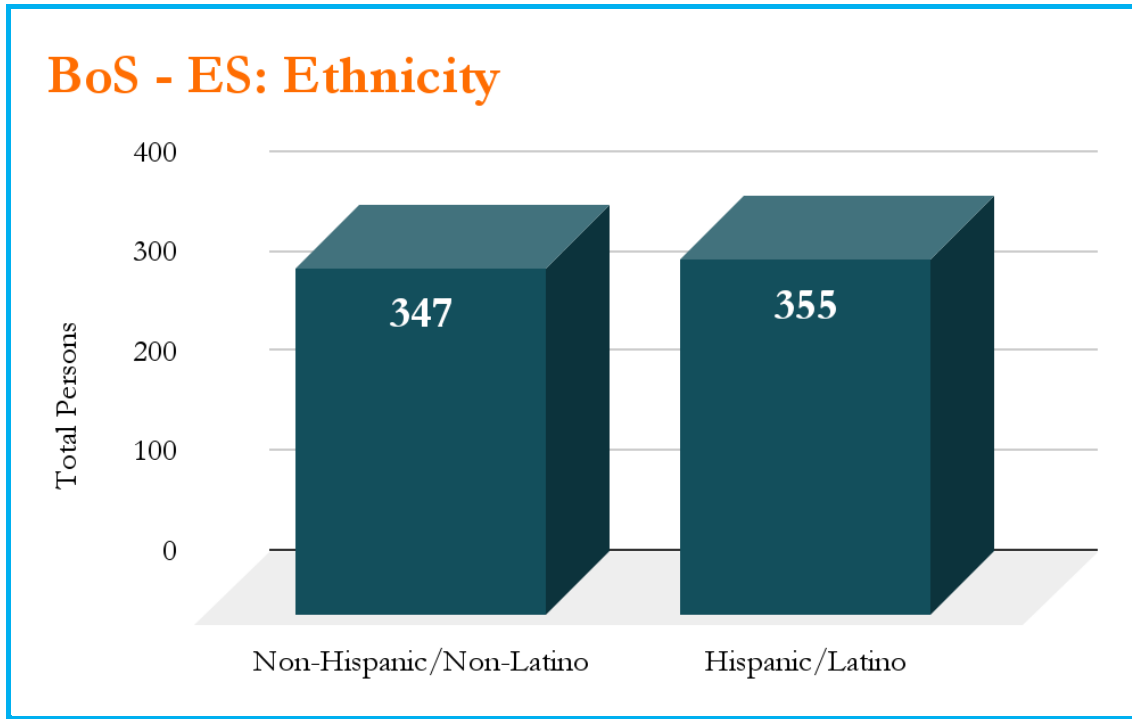
**Figure 29 - ES -BoS Gender.** This is the Gender breakdown of data for people residing in an emergency shelter on the night of January 25th.



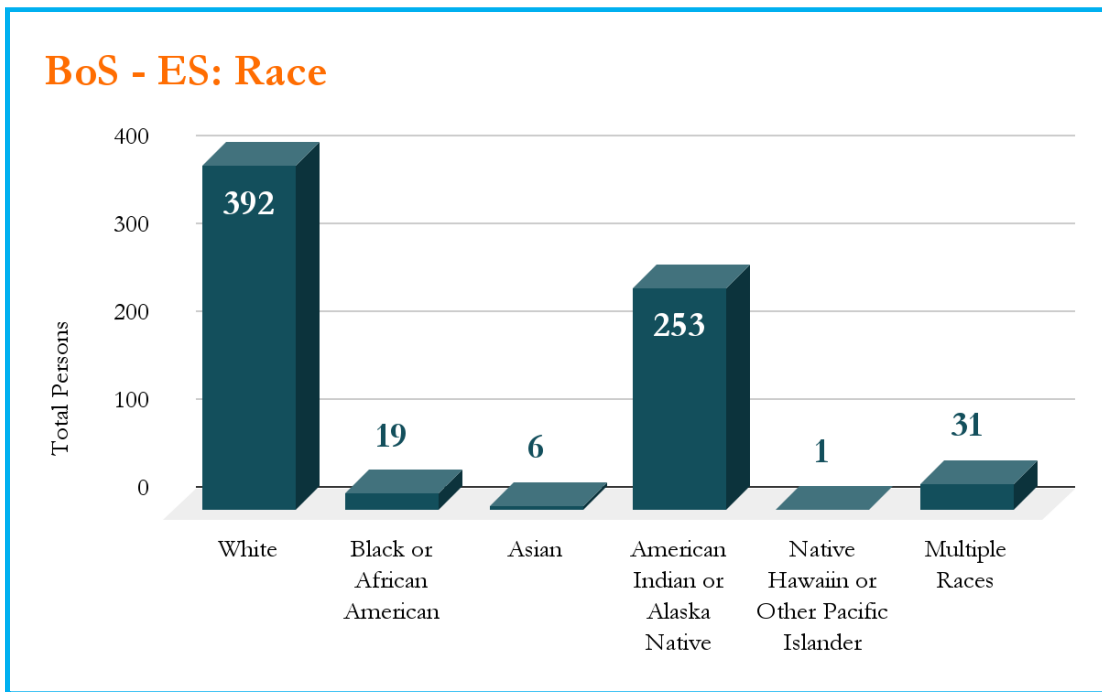
**Figure 30 - ES -BoS Age.** This is the Age breakdown of data for people residing in an emergency shelter on the night of January 25th.



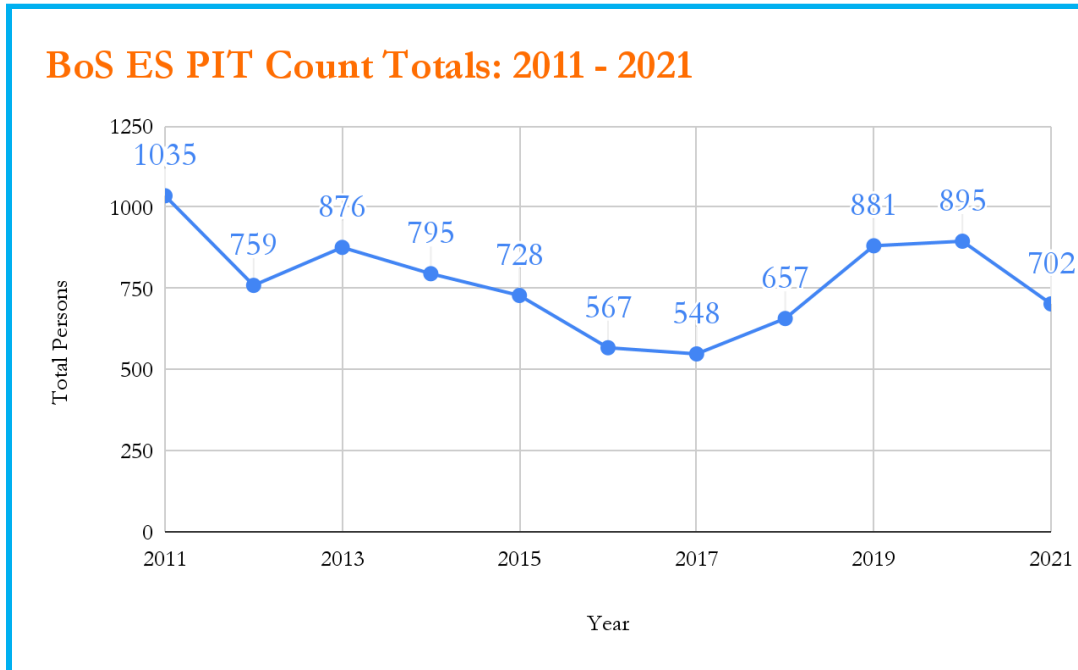
**Figure 31 - ES -BoS Ethnicity.** This is the Ethnicity breakdown of data for people residing in an emergency shelter on the night of January 25th.



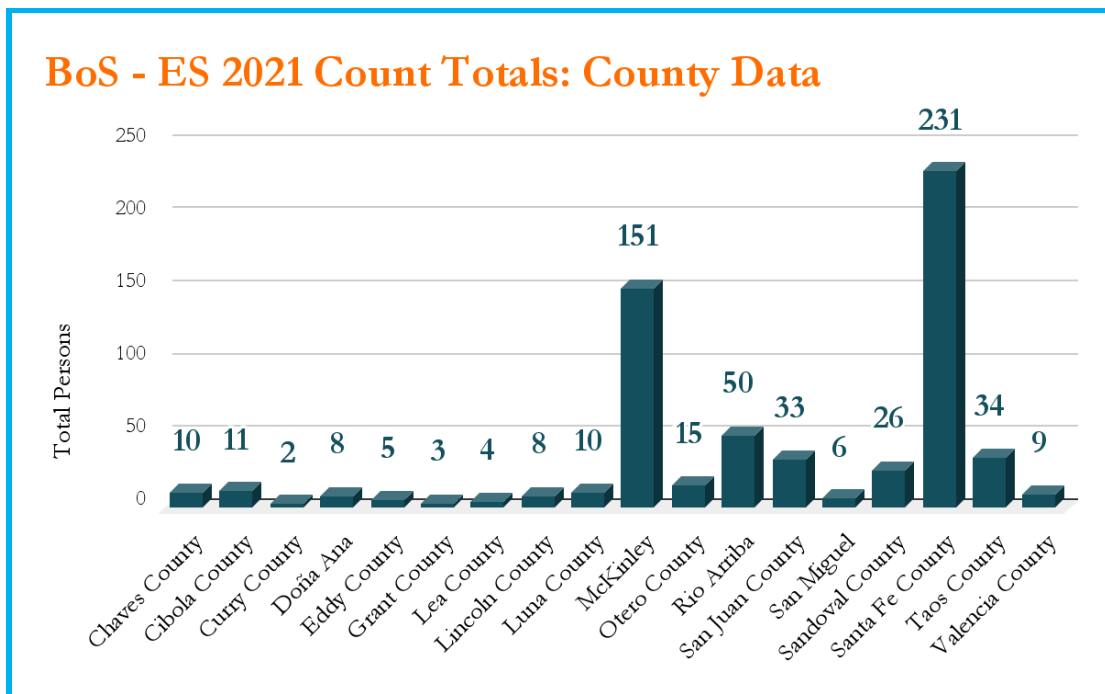
**Figure 32 - ES -BoS Race.** This is the Race breakdown of data for people residing in an emergency shelter on the night of January 25th.



**Figure 33 - ES-BoS Overtime.** Estimated number of people residing in an emergency shelter in the Balance of State during the PIT Counts 2011-2021.



**Figure 34 - ES-BoS by County.** Number of persons reported residing in an emergency shelter in the Balance of State during the 2021 PIT count by county.

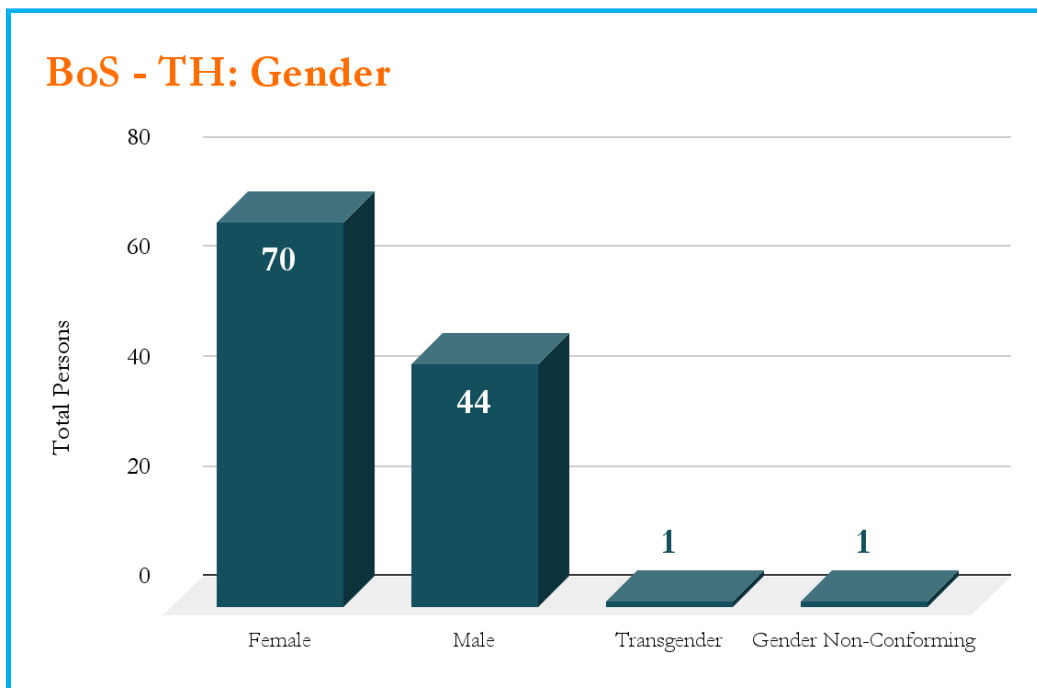


## Balance of State Sheltered Data Breakdown - Transitional Housing

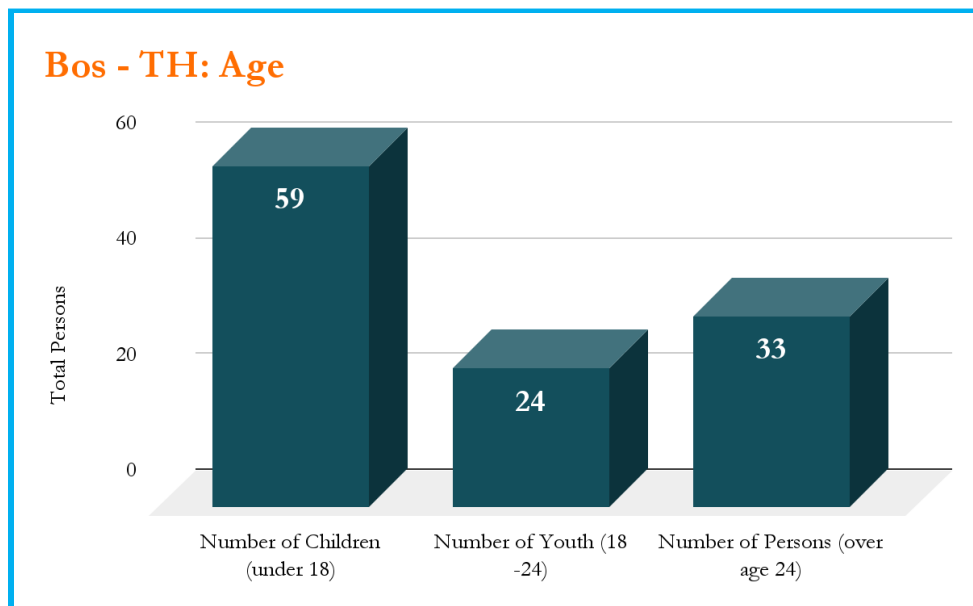
Of the data collected from Transitional Housing Programs:

- 20 (17%) identified as American Indian or Alaskan Native
- 28 (50%) identified as households without children (singles)
- Adults with a Serious Mental Illness (SMI) - 13 (22%)
- Adults with Substance Use Disorder - 10 (17%)
- 24 (20%) identified as fleeing domestic violence

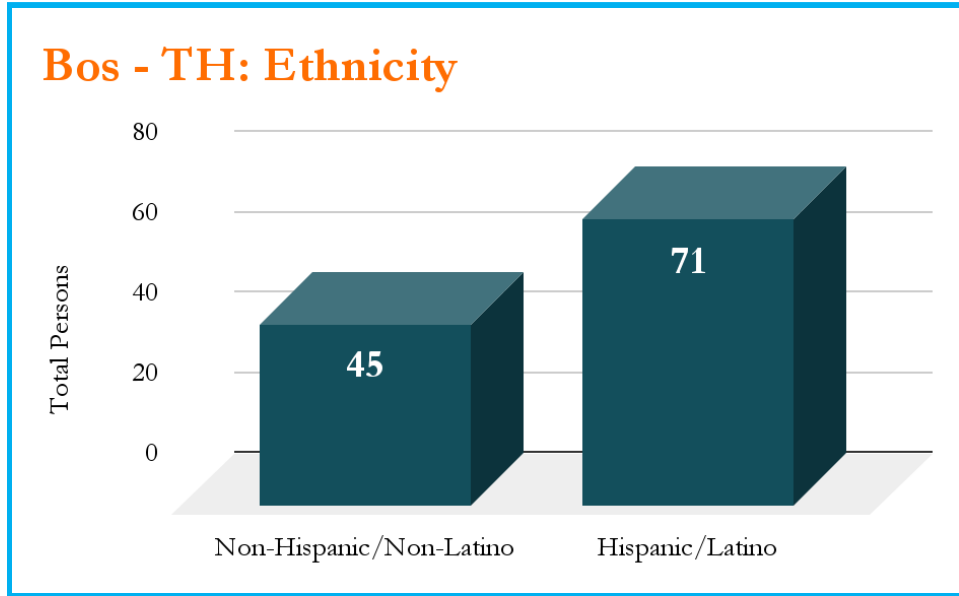
**Figure 35 - TH -BoS Gender.** This is the Gender breakdown of data for people residing in transitional housing on the night of January 25th.



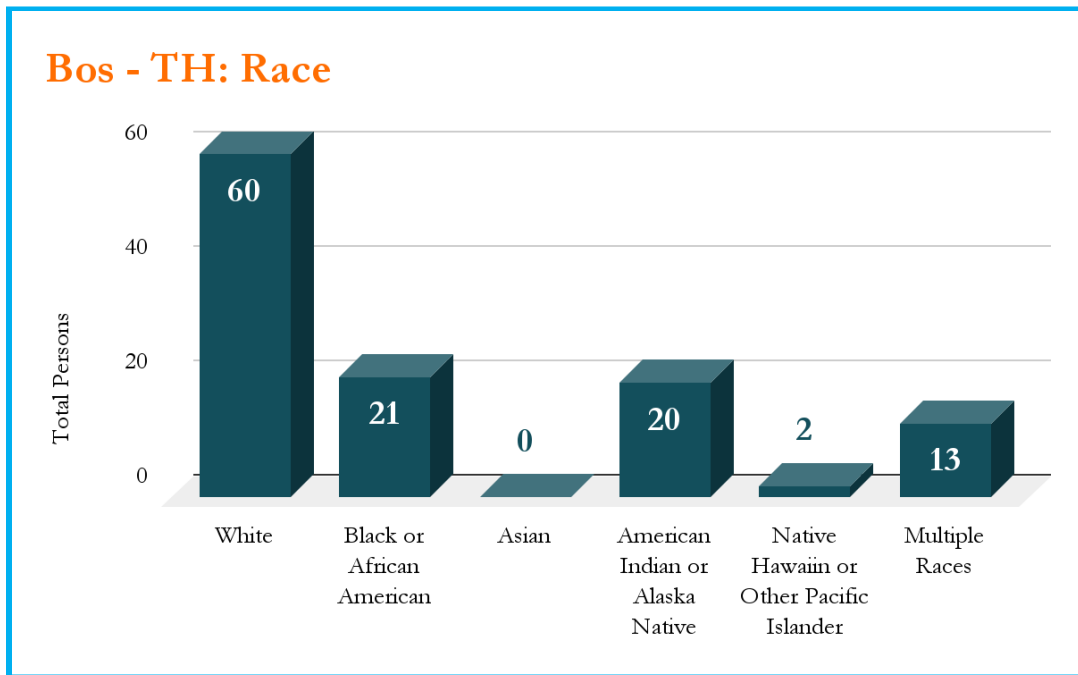
**Figure 36 - TH -BoS Age.** This is the Age breakdown of data for people residing in transitional housing on the night of January 25th.



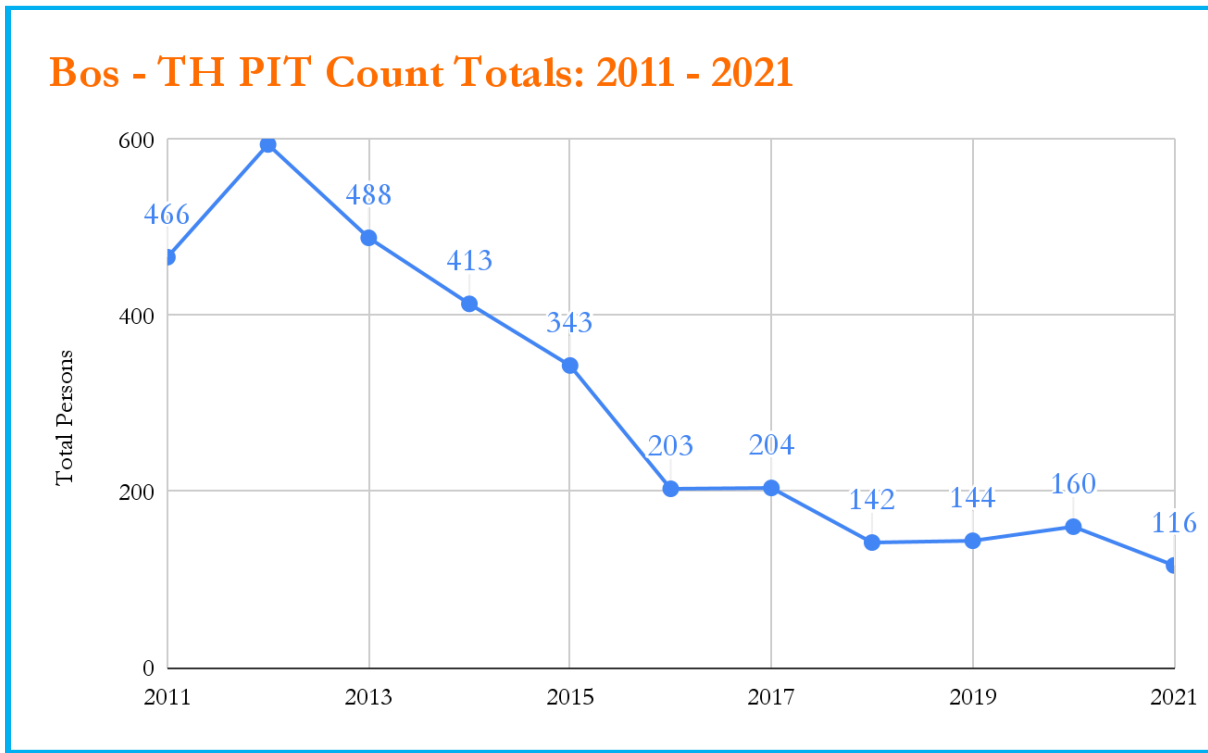
**Figure 37 - TH -BoS Ethnicity.** This is the Ethnicity breakdown of data for people residing in transitional housing on the night of January 25th.



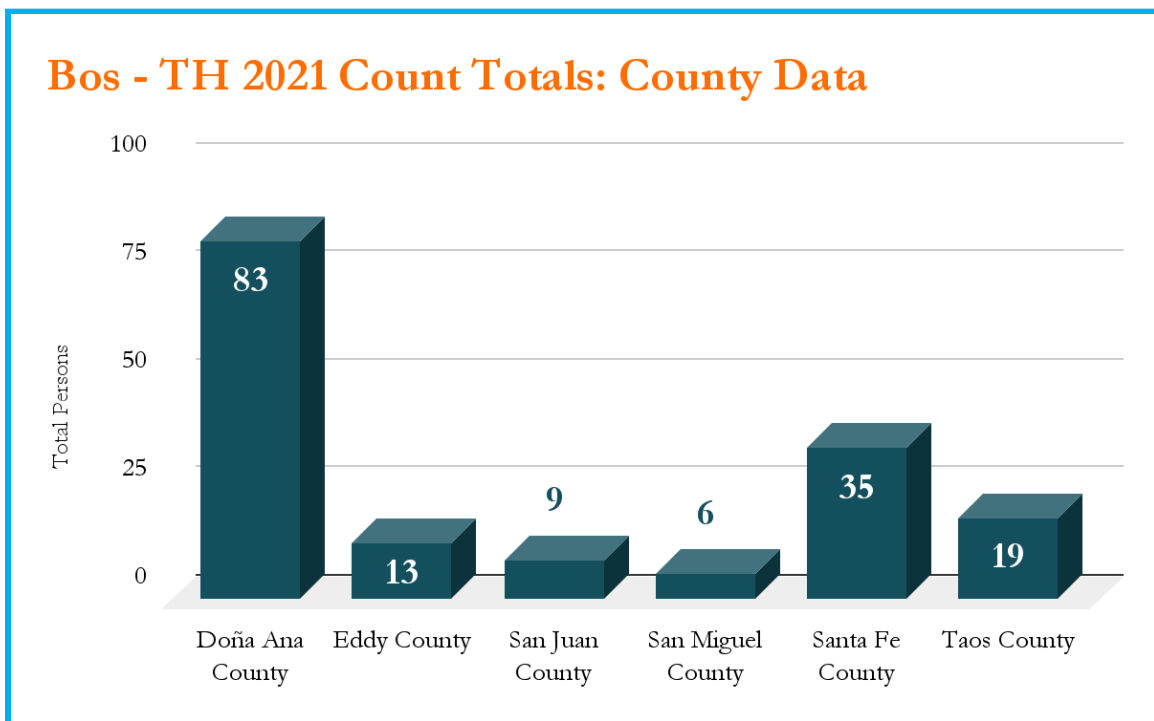
**Figure 38 - TH -BoS Race.** This is the Race breakdown of data for people residing in transitional housing on the night of January 25th.



**Figure 39 - TH -BoS Overtime.** Estimated number of people residing in transitional housing in the Balance of State during the PIT Counts 2011-2021.



**Figure 40 - TH-BoS by County.** Number of persons reported residing in transitional housing in the Balance of State during the 2021 PIT count by county.



## What you need to know about the 2021 Sheltered data

### Emergency Shelter

Emergency shelter numbers decreased from a total of 895 persons in 2020 to a total of 702 persons in 2021, a decrease of approximately 21%. This is significantly less than the 47% decrease in the unsheltered count. A possible explanation for this may be that an influx in COVID-19 related funding for wellness hotels allowed more people to obtain shelter. However, there still was a decrease which could be attributed to the generalized efforts by shelters to reduce capacity this year in congregate shelters in response to COVID-19.

The sheltered PIT count does rely heavily on accurate and timely data from Emergency Shelters. Not every shelter in the Balance of State participates in this count therefore the numbers should not be taken as definitive of all shelters. Data collected does not provide an exact number, but rather a snapshot of people in our community. Even with these limitations, the sheltered PIT Count provides important data for our community that can be used to develop effective strategies for ending homelessness in New Mexico.

The numbers of those experiencing chronic homelessness in emergency shelters also present validity concerns. Not every shelter uniformly collected or was trained to determine chronic homelessness status therefore the number reported should be regarded as a low estimate.

In the 2021 PIT planning process, efforts were made to identify and collaborate with new shelter partners and wellness hotels. We were able to secure engagement with 6 new projects, 4 of which are wellness hotels.

In contrast to Albuquerque's results, we see that the total number of people in emergency shelters that identified as American Indian or Alaskan Native is proportionately more (36%) than individuals who are unsheltered (19%). However, for the African American or Black population, only 2% were in emergency shelter which is proportionally less (almost double) than the unsheltered population at nearly 4%. We see people that identify as White make up roughly 392 (55%) of all people residing in emergency shelters.

We also see that those reporting a serious mental illness (SMI) are proportionately less than those residing in an unsheltered location, with 20% and 39% respectively. This is similar to the results for those reporting substance use disorder (SUD), with 40% in emergency shelters and 70% unsheltered.

### Transitional Housing

Transitional housing is unique in that it is largely targeted to certain subpopulations, including, and not limited to: Veterans, people that have substance abuse and mental illness, or survivors of domestic violence. We see that the demographic breakdown reflects the program constructions.

NMCEH's methodology for aggregating Transitional Housing data has not changed much over the years, therefore comparison of the different counts is practical. In 2021, we recorded 116 people who were residing in a Transitional Housing on the night of January 25<sup>th</sup>. This is a decrease of 27.5% from the 160 persons reported in TH on the night of 2020 Sheltered PIT count, and subsequently we see the trend of Transitional Housing decreasing.



## (6) Acknowledgments

**Together, we...**

Collaborated to count our neighbors and fellow community members who are living without fixed, suitable housing. This required many hours of planning both for our standard count efforts, but to also incorporate COVID-19 Pandemic safe practices. Through the pandemic concerns and more limited staff than usual, as a state we came together to provide this important data for our system of homeless services and housing in New Mexico.

**Thank you to all of our partners!  
You made the 2021 Point-In-Time count a success.**

**We couldn't have done it without you!!**

## (7) Resources

### HUD Requirements & definitions

**Continuum of Care:**

<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CFR-2017-title24-vol3/xml/CFR-2017-title24-vol3-part578.xml>

**Point-In-Time Count:** *\*HUD referenced the 2019 notice for the 2021 count.*

<https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/Notice-CPD-18-08-2019-HIC-PIT-Data-Collection-Notice.pdf>

**Homeless Definition:**

[https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/HEARTH\\_HomelessDefinition\\_FinalRule.pdf](https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/HEARTH_HomelessDefinition_FinalRule.pdf)

**Chronic Homeless Definition:**

<https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/Defining-Chronically-Homeless-Final-Rule.pdf>

**Nationwide PIT counts since 2007:**

<https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/3031/pit-and-hic-data-since-2007/>

### Previous Balance of State and Albuquerque Data

**NMCEH Website:**

<https://nmceh.org/pages/homelessnessReports.html>

**For any questions regarding this report contact:**

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Continuum of Care Director

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505-433-5175

www.nmceh.org

## 2021 Unsheltered Point-In-Time Count Survey



**New Mexico  
Point in Time Survey  
January 25<sup>th</sup> 2021**

Interviewer's Name:	
Date:	Time:

<p><b>START HERE:</b> I am doing an anonymous survey today to learn more about the housing status of people in our community. The survey is completely voluntary and takes only 3-5 minutes to complete. If you choose to participate, you can skip any question that you don't wish to answer or stop the survey at any time. Would you be willing to take the survey today?</p>	
<p>1) Ask if the person has already completed a survey about where they stayed on Monday, January 25<sup>th</sup>. If they have not completed the survey, <u>move on to the next question.</u> If they have already completed the survey, <u>thank them for their time and do not move forward with the survey.</u></p>	
<p>2) Did you stay in one of the locations listed below on the night of Monday, January 25<sup>th</sup>?</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Abandoned Building      <input type="checkbox"/> Shed/Garage/Storage Unit  <input type="checkbox"/> Bus or Train Station      <input type="checkbox"/> Street, Park, Camping Ground or Other outdoor location  <input type="checkbox"/> Car      <input type="checkbox"/> Other location that could be considered unsheltered:  <input type="checkbox"/> Homeless- won't say where      Provide details: _____         </p>	
<p>If they <u>did not</u> stay in one of the locations listed above on the night of Monday, January 25<sup>th</sup>, <u>thank them for their time and do not move forward with the survey.</u> If they did, <u>please continue with the survey.</u></p>	
First Two Letters of First Name:	First Two Letters of Last Name:
Age:	Month you were born:
Location on the night of January 25, 2021(city and/or county):	
#2 continued:	
Is this the first time you have been homeless? _____ Is your current status related to COVID-19? _____	
How long has it been since you had stable housing? ____ Days ____ Weeks ____ Months ____ Years	
Including your current situation, how many separate times have you stayed in shelters or on the streets in the past 3 years? _____	
If you added up each of these times, would you say it was more or less than 12 months? ____ More ____ Less	
<p>3) What gender do you most identify with? <input type="checkbox"/> Female    <input type="checkbox"/> Male    <input type="checkbox"/> Transgender    <input type="checkbox"/> Refused  <input type="checkbox"/> Gender Non-Conforming (i.e., not exclusively male or female)</p>	
<p>4) Would you say that you are: <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic/Latino <u>or</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Hispanic/Latino    <input type="checkbox"/> Refused</p>	
<p>5) What race do you most identify with? Select all that apply.  <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian or Alaskan Native    <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander    <input type="checkbox"/> Asian  <input type="checkbox"/> White    <input type="checkbox"/> Black or African American    <input type="checkbox"/> Refused            Tribal Affiliation or Enrollment (If the participant answered "American Indian"): _____</p>	
<p>6) Have you served at least one-day active duty in the US Military? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes    <input type="checkbox"/> No    <input type="checkbox"/> Refused</p>	
<p>7) (Only ask if the person is <u>over 18</u>) Do you have or have you been told you have? Check all that apply.  <input type="checkbox"/> A Mental Health Condition    <input type="checkbox"/> A Substance Abuse Issue    <input type="checkbox"/> HIV/AIDS  <input type="checkbox"/> Any disabling condition of long duration, such as a chronic physical illness, traumatic brain injury, or a developmental disability    <input type="checkbox"/> Refused</p>	
<p>8) (Only ask if the person is <u>over 18</u>) Is your current housing status a result of domestic violence?  <input type="checkbox"/> Yes    <input type="checkbox"/> No    <input type="checkbox"/> Refused</p>	

9) Did any family or household members, such as your child, spouse/partner or parent, stay with you on Monday, January 25<sup>th</sup>?  Yes  No  Refused

If yes,

How many children under age 18 stayed with you? \_\_\_\_\_

How many people age 18-24 stayed with you? \_\_\_\_\_

How many people over age 24 stayed with you? \_\_\_\_\_

(Only ask if *under 18 years of age*) Did you stay with a parent or legal guardian?  Yes  No  Refused

If additional household members, please continue to #10.

10) Please use the following questions if your household includes any additional members. Please use the space at the end of the survey to answer the questions for further additional household members, labeling them #2, #3, etc.

Household member #1:

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender most identified with?  Female  Male  Transgender  Refused

Gender Non-Conforming (i.e., not exclusively male or female)

Which ethnicity would you say they are?  Hispanic/Latino  Non-Hispanic/Latino  Refused

Which race do they most identify with? Select all that apply.

American Indian or Alaskan Native  Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

Asian  White  Black or African American  Refused

Tribal Affiliation or Enrollment (If the participant answered "American Indian"): \_\_\_\_\_

If the respondent has time and is willing, ask the following questions:

11) How long have you been in this (City/Town)?

<3 Months \_\_\_\_\_ 3-12 months \_\_\_\_\_ 1-2 Years \_\_\_\_\_ > 2 Years \_\_\_\_\_ From here \_\_\_\_\_ Refused \_\_\_\_\_

12) Where were you before you came here?

Other place in NM? (city/town/village) \_\_\_\_\_

Nearby state

Colorado  Texas

Arizona  Utah

Or other part of the US, or outside of US (state or country) \_\_\_\_\_

13) What brought you here?

Job opportunity  Resources  Friends/Family  Like it here  Other \_\_\_\_\_

14) Were you homeless when you came here?  Yes  No  Refused

15) Are you attending school?  Yes  No  Refused

16) Are you employed?  Yes  No  Refused