

2020 Annual Report

This Annual Report is a publication of the activities and progress made by the Portsmouth Homeless Action Consortium to prevent and end homelessness between July 1, 2019 and June 30, 2020. The data provided is sourced from the Hampton Roads HMIS (Homeless Management Information System), which is administered by The Planning Council.

Hampton Roads HMIS is a repository for client-level data and a required data tool for any agencies receiving funds from the U.S. government to assist homeless clients. HMIS provides the capability at the community level to generate aggregate reports that can assist in completion of the required project reports, CoC reports, and a multitude of other local needs assessments; to support community education regarding the number and characteristics of homeless populations as well as a variety of other issues related to poverty; and to inform policy decisions aimed at addressing and ending homelessness at local, state and federal levels.

About PHAC

The Portsmouth Homeless Action Consortium (PHAC) is made up of over 20 agencies and individuals who work to carry out the mission **“To help decrease homelessness and enhance the quality of life of persons at risk of or experiencing homelessness in Portsmouth by fostering their levels of self-sufficiency through housing assistance and a supportive network of community services.”**

PHAC serves as a Continuum of Care (CoC), the forum responsible for coordination and management of federal, state and local funding for homeless services. The Lead Agency for facilitation and coordination is the Portsmouth Department of Social Services, with consultation assistance from The Planning Council. PHAC recognizes five subcommittees that carry out the regular activities required to obtain funding that implements programs:

- Executive Committee
- Policy & Planning Committee
- HMIS and Data Collection Committee
- Coordinated Entry System Committee
- Portsmouth Coordinated Assessment Network (PCAN)

Special thanks to the City of Portsmouth for its ongoing support of the work accomplished by PHAC to prevent and end homelessness.



Summary

Over the past year, the Portsmouth Homeless Action Consortium has continued to streamline housing and supportive service collaborations, as well as diversify its funding to better respond to the changing environment for persons experiencing homelessness. Service provider agencies acted quickly to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic in March, securing additional federal, state and local funding to ensure those literally homeless could access hotels or other types of sheltering along with food, prevented evictions with financial assistance for housing and utilities, and maintained operations with enhanced cleaning and safety protocols.

Some highlighted accomplishments and new funding for the period of July 2019 – June 2020 include:

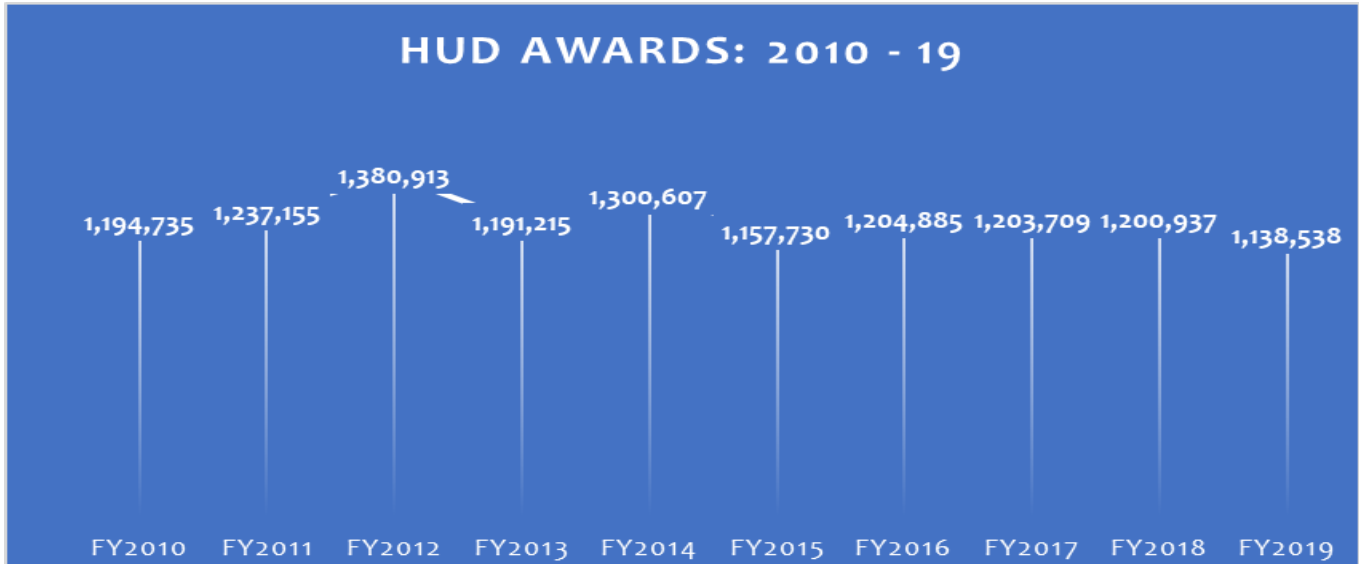
- The 'Foster Youth to Independence Initiative' program award of \$113,170 that provides housing assistance for 14 vulnerable young adults who have aged-out of the foster care system. The housing vouchers are administered as part of a partnership between the Portsmouth Redevelopment and Housing Authority and Portsmouth Department of Social Services.
- A first-ever award of Virginia Housing Trust funds to Virginia Supportive Housing of \$55,000 to expand supportive services capacity at South Bay Apartments for 42 individuals living in permanent supportive housing.
- Portsmouth Volunteers for the Homeless and the HER Shelter together received an additional COVID-19 funds of \$59,000 for Emergency Shelter, and the HER Shelter \$86,469 for Rapid Rehousing from the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development from April – June (with more awards made after June 30).
- Community Development Block Grant – COVID-19 funding of \$662,921 awarded to ForKids Inc., the HER Shelter, STOP Inc. and Endependence Center for hotel/emergency shelter stays, rental and utilities assistance, transportation, case management services and specialized medical equipment.
- \$40,000 in COVID relief to four agencies: Portsmouth Area Resource Coalition, HER Shelter, Portsmouth Volunteers for the Homeless, and Portsmouth Department of Social Services for essential supplies and operations expenses to support homeless service agencies.
- \$450,000 to Portsmouth Department of Social Services to manage the Rent and Mortgage Relief Program to assist residents at imminent risk of losing their housing.
- The highest score across Greater Hampton Roads for the FY2019 Homeless Assistance application submitted to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in September 2019.

PHAC received COVID-19-related emergency funding of over \$595,000 from the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development.

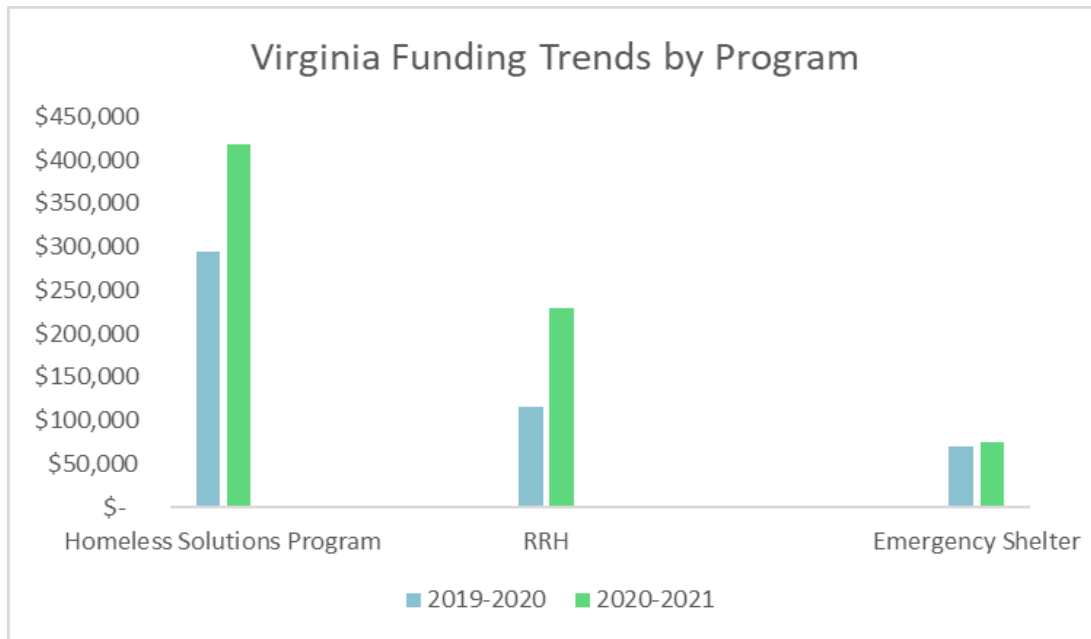
Federal and State Funding Trends

Federal -

Funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development has more or less remained level since 2010, varying between \$1.1 and \$1.3 million. In the FY2019 competition, all renewal programs were approved, and Portsmouth Area Resource Coalition, Inc. successfully reallocated a transitional housing program to create 10 new Permanent Supportive Housing beds.



State -

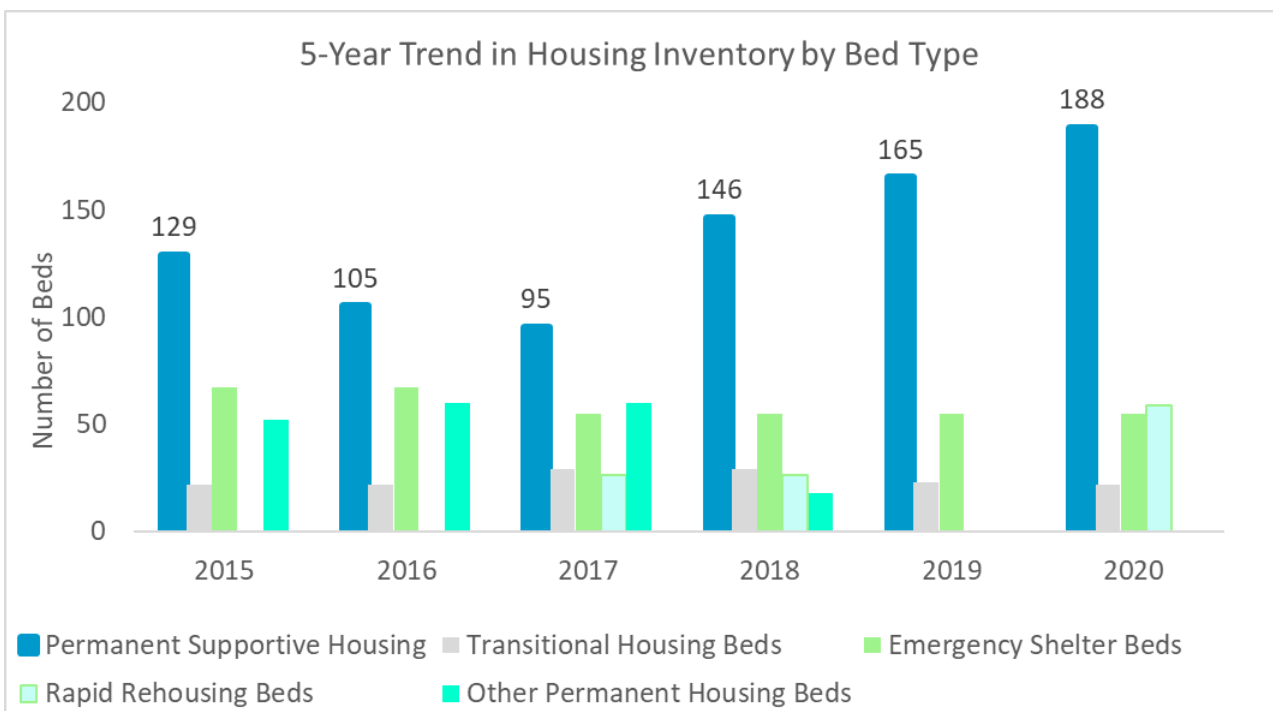
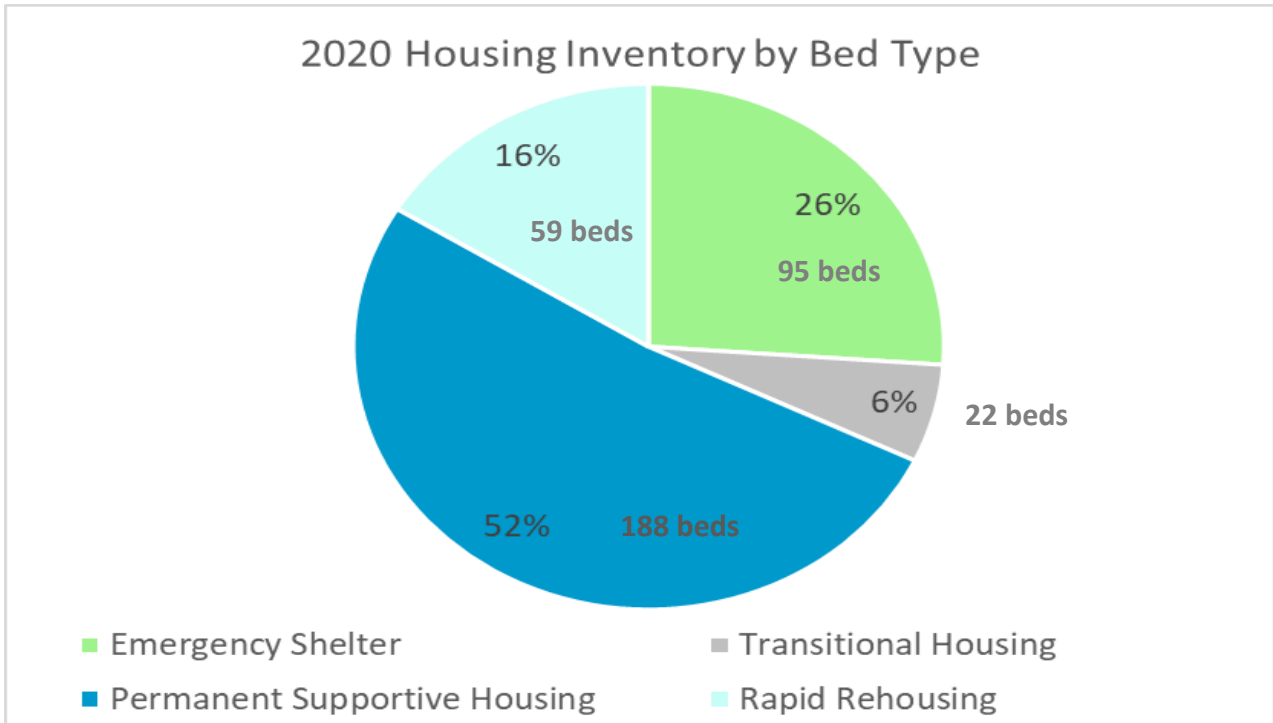


PHAC secured a 42% increase in funding in June 2020 for the next year from DHCD. The most significant increase was for Rapid Rehousing, which was almost doubled (a 98% increase) and an award to STOP Inc. for Rapid Rehousing for singles.

Additionally, COVID-19 Emergency Response funding became available for the period of April - June, providing \$59,000 more for emergency shelter to Portsmouth Volunteers for the Homeless and to Help and Emergency Response, Inc. H.E.R. also received \$86,469 to expand Rapid Rehousing.

Housing Inventory Resources

These are available housing services and compiled in conjunction with the annual Point in Time Count each year. In the past year, a total of 364 beds were available for persons experiencing homelessness in the City of Portsmouth. Service providers have secured a good mix of housing options and have invested over half (52%) of their program funds into Permanent Supportive Housing, which provides housing and supportive services for the most vulnerable households. With additional state funding awarded, PHAC will show a marked increase in Rapid Rehousing beds in the next year.

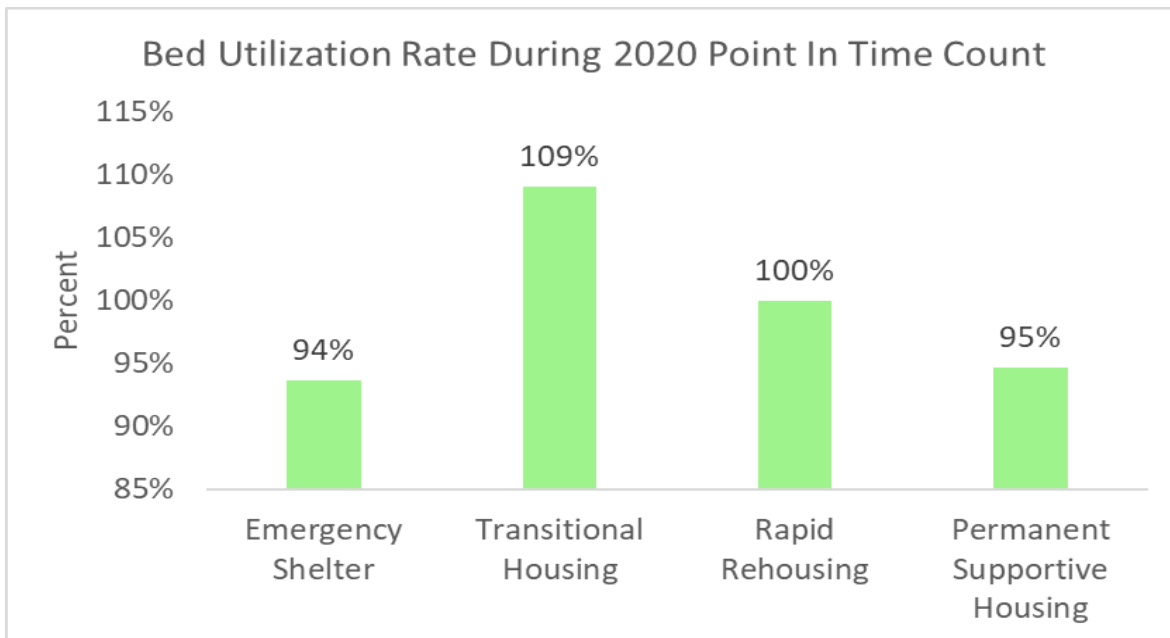


Housing Inventory: Utilization Rate

During the night of the January 2020 Point in Time (PIT) Count, 100% of the beds for Rapid Rehousing and Transitional Housing were occupied. Additionally, 94% of Emergency Shelter and 95% Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) beds were utilized, although the winter shelter for single adults was at full capacity. This is sometimes attributed to having warmer weather and less persons seeking shelter, or a delay in identifying the appropriate household for PSH. In any case, utilization of all beds was close to capacity.

2020 Housing Type	Number of Beds	Number beds used during PIT	Utilization Rate during PIT
Emergency Shelter	95	89	94%
Transitional Housing	22	24	109%
Permanent Supportive Housing	188	178	95%
Rapid Rehousing	59	59	100%
Total beds	364	348	

**Emergency Shelter includes motel stays, as well as congregate shelter.*



While the Point In Time Count seeks to identify the need in the local CoC on a given night, the Housing Inventory Count considers the housing services available to meet that need. It is important to remember that a variety of factors come into play when looking at Housing Inventory, such as utilization (the number of persons receiving services that night), and turnover rates (the number of persons per bed, fluctuating household sizes, new report requirements), to name a few.

Point in Time Count Trends

2019-2020

Point in Time Count	2019 Results PHAC	2020 Results PHAC	Change: PHAC 19-20
Total Number of Persons	119	149	↑
Number Sheltered	108	113	↑
Number Unsheltered	11	36	↑
Number of Adults	94	116	↑
Number of Children	25	33	↑
Number of Families*	13	17	↑
Number of Persons in Families*	39	50	↑
Number of Unsheltered Families	0	0	==
Number of Unsheltered Children	0	0	==
Number of Adult Only Households	80	98	↑
Number of Persons in Adult Only Households	80	99	↑
Number of Unsheltered Persons in Adult Only Households	11	36	↑
Total Number of Persons in Households with only Children	0	0	==

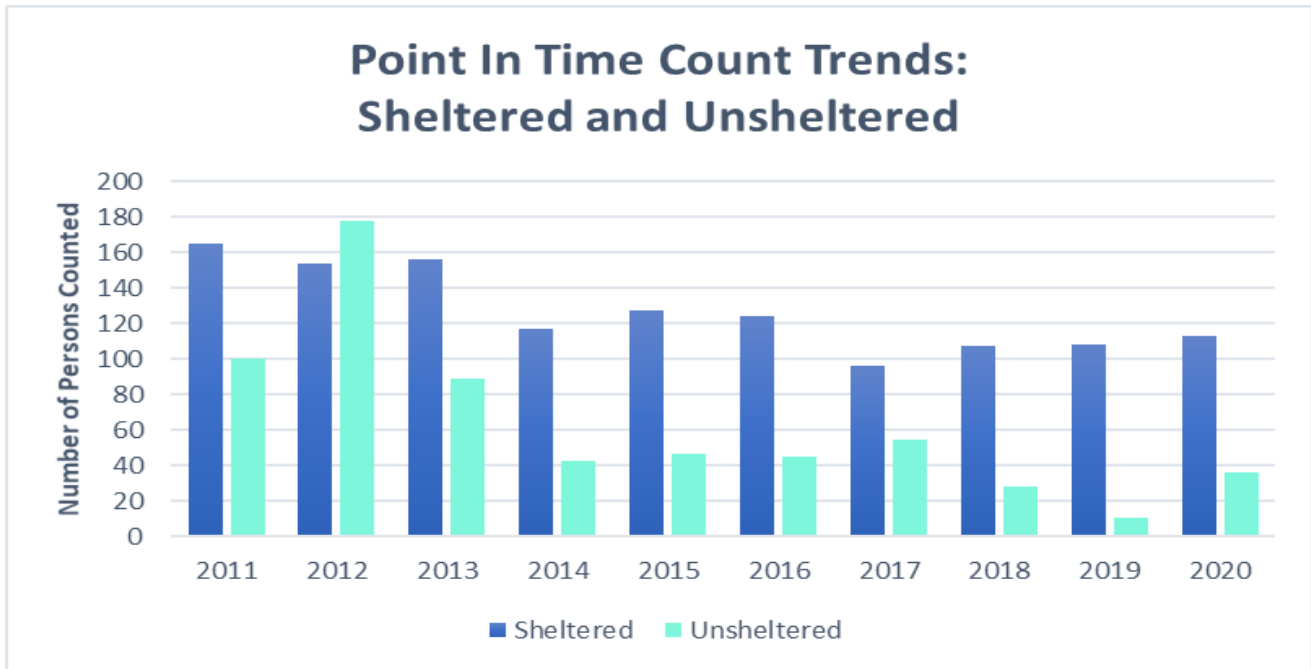
Point in Time Count Trends

2019-2020

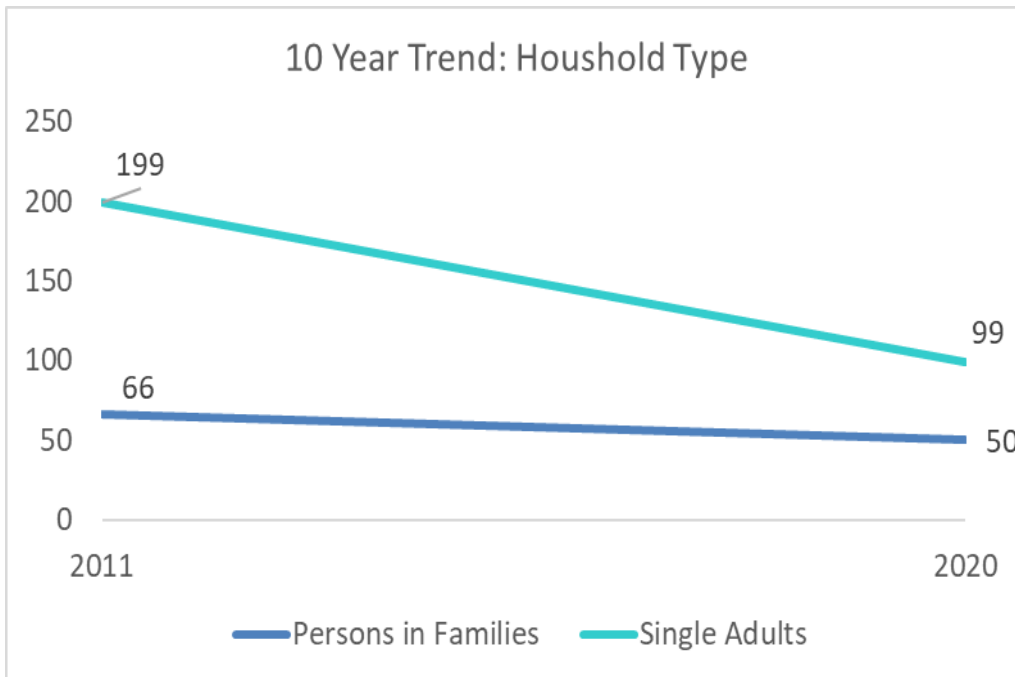
Point in Time Count	2019 Results PHAC	2020 Results PHAC	Change: PHAC 19-20
Total Number of Chronically Homeless Individuals	8	14	↑
Total Number of Chronically Homeless Families	0	0	▬
Total Number of Persons in Chronically Homeless Families	0	0	▬
Total Number of Veterans	15	10	↓
Total Number of Female Veterans	NA	0	
Total Number of Parenting Youth	3	0	↓
Total Number of Unaccompanied Youth	0	3	↑
Total Number of Adults Fleeing Domestic Violence	14	15	↑
Total Number of Adults with a Substance Abuse Problem	4	11	↑
Total Number of Adults with a Serious Mental Illness	3	23	↑
Total Number of Adults Living with HIV/AIDS	2	0	↓

Note: Arrows indicate whether there is an increase or decrease in those counted. An equal sign demonstrates no change.

Ten Year Point in Time Count Trends



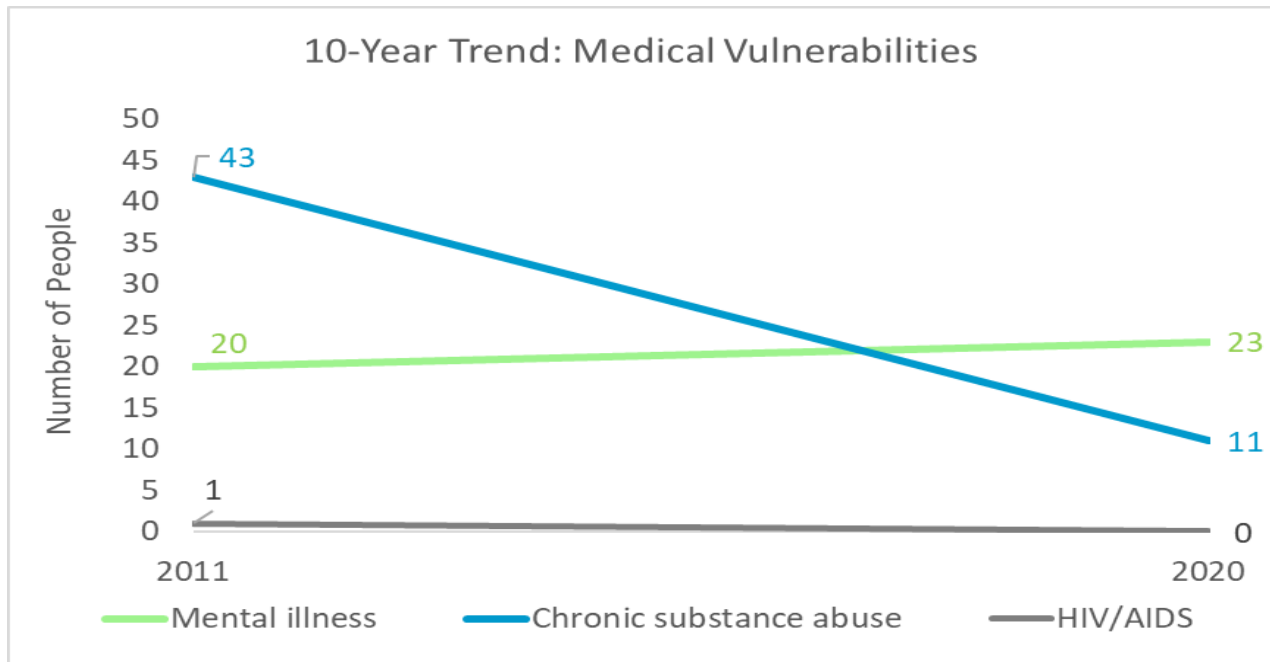
Over the past ten years, the efforts of the PHAC service provider agencies, along with increased state funding and streamlined collaboration, **have decreased the overall homeless counted each January by 44%**. Those found unsheltered - i.e. living on the streets, in cars or other places not meant for human habitation - also decreased significantly during that period, by 64%. In 2020, there was an increase identified in both sheltered and unsheltered persons during the PIT Count. This includes both observations and interviews recorded with persons experiencing homelessness.



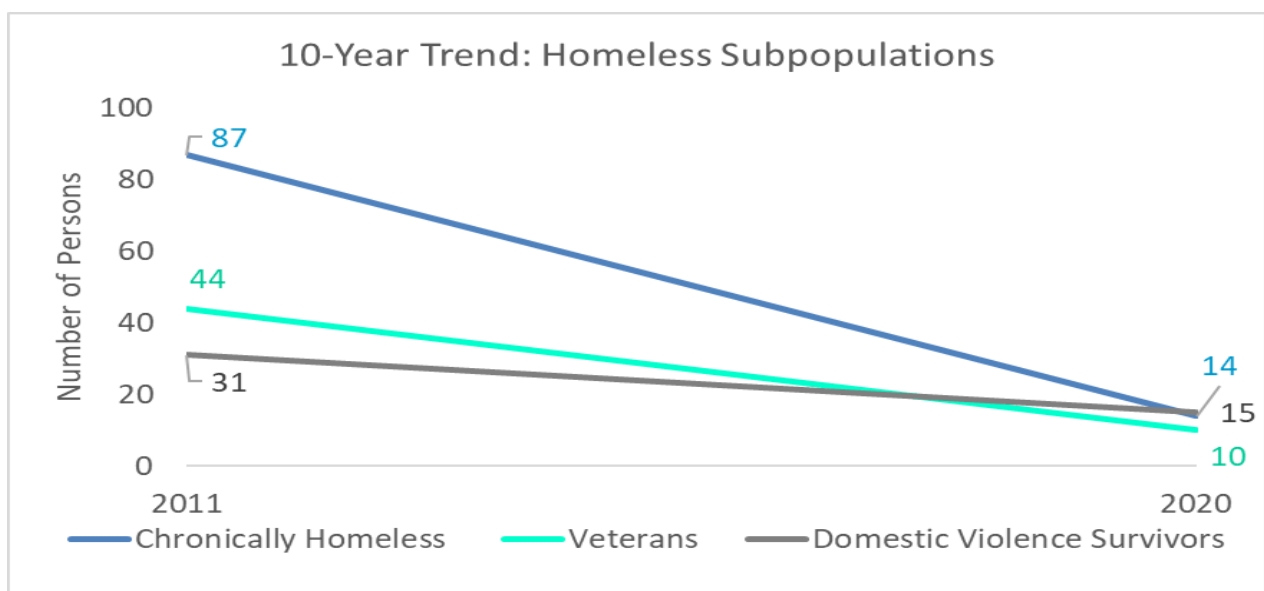
Between 2011 and 2020, the number of **single adults experiencing homelessness has decreased by 50%**, from 199 to 99 persons. During the same time period, the number of persons in **families experiencing homelessness decreased by 24%**, from 66 to 50 persons.

Ten Year Point in Time Count Trends

Between 2011 and 2020, PHAC service provider agencies have seen fewer homeless persons with medical vulnerabilities such as severe mental illness and HIV/AIDS. Persons with severe chronic substance use who experience homelessness decreased by 77%, from 43 to 11 persons over the 10-year period.



As a result of PHAC service providers working to end chronic homelessness, over a ten year period, **persons experiencing chronic homelessness have decreased by 84%**, from 87 persons in 2011 to 14 persons in 2020. The **homeless veteran population has decreased by 78%**, from 44 persons in 2011 to just 10 in 2010. And the number of **domestic violence survivors experiencing homelessness decreased by 52%**, from 31 persons to 15 persons over the 10 year period.




System Performance Measures


The purpose of the *System Performance Measures* is to help communities gauge their progress in preventing and ending homelessness and provide a more complete picture of how well a community is achieving this goal. Each year, CoCs are required to assess system-wide performance using 7 criteria developed by HUD. Federal funding from HUD is based partly on the CoC's performance in these key areas. Below are PHAC's System Performance Measures over the past three years.

System Performance Measures Trend Report FY 17-19


Length of Time Persons Remain Homeless

Jurisdiction	FY17	FY18	FY19	Change
Portsmouth	138	109	178	

Returns to Homelessness from Permanent Supportive Housing Within 2 Years

Jurisdiction	FY18	FY19	Change
Portsmouth	16/13%	18/15%	


Number of Homeless

Jurisdiction	FY17	FY18	FY19	Change
Portsmouth	151	135	119	

Percentage of Adults Who Increased Earned Income


Jurisdiction	FY17	FY18	FY19	Change
Portsmouth	26%	24%	24%	N/A

Percentage of Adults Who Increased Total Income


Jurisdiction	FY17	FY18	FY19	Change
Portsmouth	47%	41%	52%	

*Includes both earned income and non-employment cash

Number of Persons Who Become Homeless for the First Time

Jurisdiction	FY17	FY18	FY19	Change
Portsmouth	276	232	113	

Percent of Successful Permanent Housing Placements

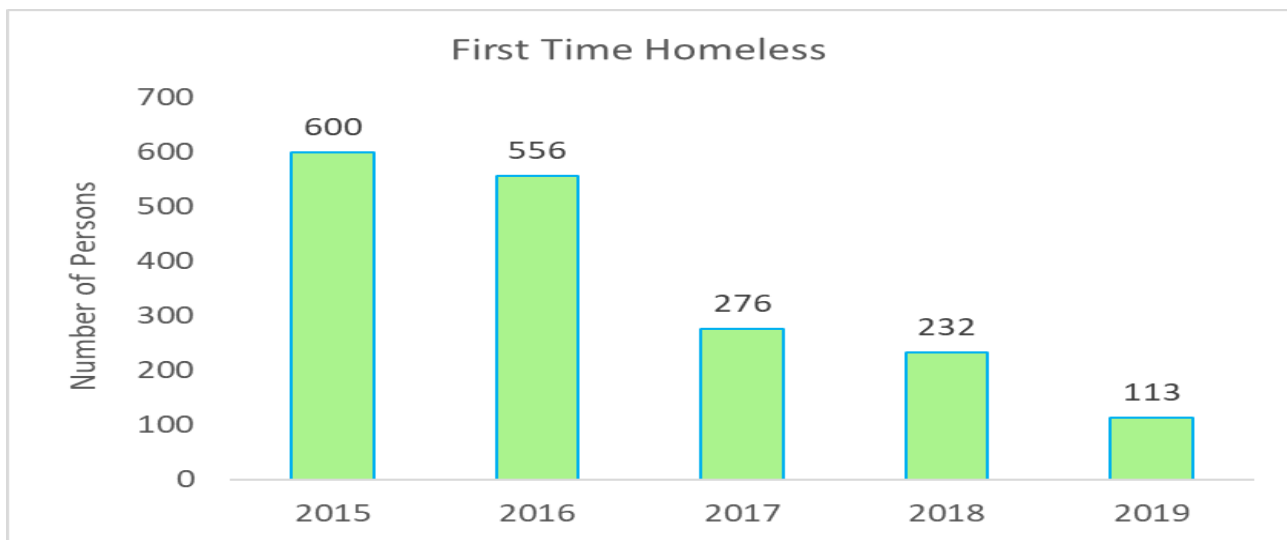
Jurisdiction	FY17	FY18	FY19	Change
Portsmouth	96%	96%	98%	

*Includes both exits from and retention in Permanent Housing

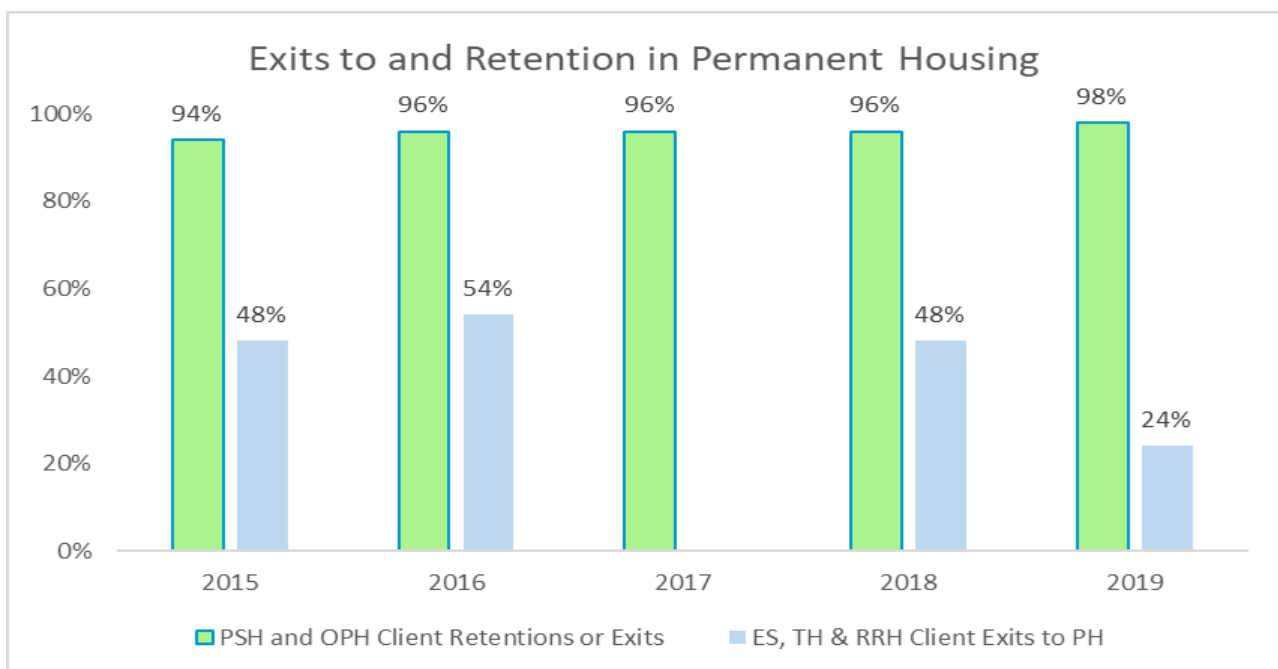
Five Year System Performance Measures Trends

Measuring performance evaluates progress towards meeting goals. HUD has defined seven System Performance Measures that evaluate system-wide performance of both federally funded and non-federally funded agencies. Below are excerpts of the data reported for October 1, 2018 - September 30, 2019.

The number of **persons becoming homeless for the first time has significantly decreased** from 600 in 2015 to just 113 in 2020.



Between FY2015 and FY2019, **PHAC consistently performed well in assisting persons in Permanent Supportive Housing to maintain housing or exit to other permanent housing.** The percentage of those exiting Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing or Rapid Rehousing into Permanent Housing ranged between 48% to 24% during the 5-year period.

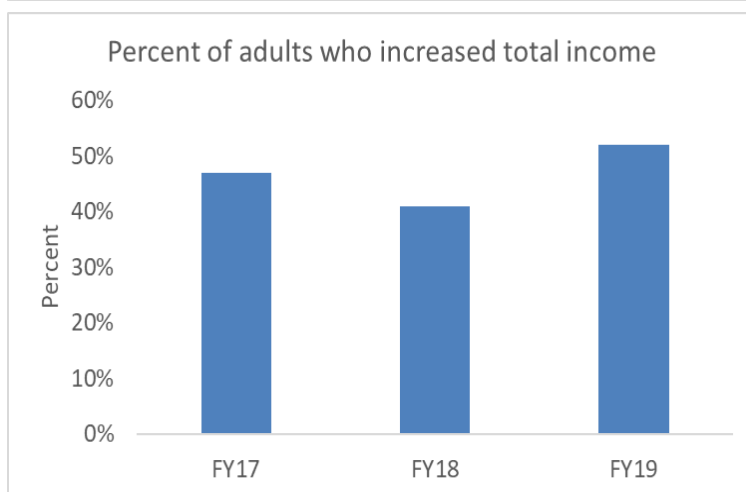
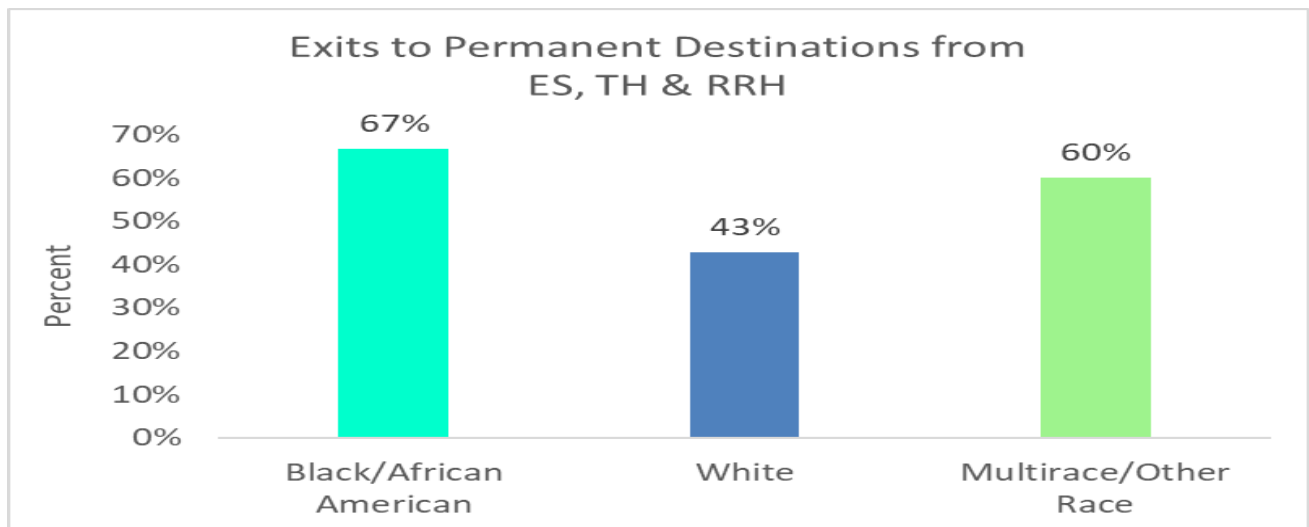


Racial Disparities Assessment

The United States has a history of creating inequity for persons of color, particularly when it comes to obtaining and maintaining equal and fair housing. PHAC utilizes its data from HMIS to determine: 1) if people of different races and ethnicities within the city are *more* or *less* likely to receive homeless assistance, 2) if people of different races and ethnicities receiving homeless assistance are *more* or *less* likely to receive a positive outcome, 3) if there are racial or ethnic disparities in PHAC's provision of homeless assistance, and 4) progress of PHAC to address any potential racial disparities identified within its service system.

The greatest racial disparities are among Black or African Americans and those identifying as Multiracial:

- Black or African Americans represent 53% of the general population in Portsmouth, 23% of those in poverty and 47% of those receiving homeless assistance.
- Those identifying as Multiracial represent 4% of the general population in Portsmouth, 13% of those in poverty but *nearly half (47%) of those receiving homeless assistance*. There may be underlying disparities based on these individuals' primary race, but without knowing the primary or secondary race of these individuals, it is difficult to fully understand the disparities experienced by this population.
- In contrast, Whites represent 40% of the population but just 11% of those in poverty and only 4% of those receiving homeless assistance.



Looking at earned income as well as benefits income for households while they are in housing and services, **PHAC providers have been successful in increasing the total income per household before they exit programs.**

Gaps Analysis Discussion

In 2019-2020, the biggest housing gaps identified in Portsmouth were Rapid Rehousing followed by Permanent Supportive Housing. These gaps were identified by PHAC members and supported by reviews of the Housing Inventory and the data about the length of time households waited for appropriate housing options through the Coordinated Entry System (the Portsmouth Coordinated Assessment Network, or PCAN). Additional data includes stated needs from calls to the Housing Crisis Hotline.

The population with the greatest service delivery need in Portsmouth is individuals, followed by families, as demonstrated in the data collected and reported to HUD each year. Prevention funds are also extremely limited and are not readily available for all at-risk households that qualify. The demand for emergency shelter beds for individuals experiencing homelessness on a year-round basis is also not met, especially during the months of March to November when the seasonal shelter is not operating.

Therefore, increased requests to expand Emergency Shelter, Rapid Rehousing and Homeless Prevention programs are the focus of the PHAC members seeking additional resources in order to prevent and end homelessness.

A system-wide report for those assisted by Portsmouth's homeless service providers demonstrates the total number of persons served between July 1, 2019 and June 30, 2020 in each project type is:

- Homelessness Prevention – 39
- Emergency Shelter – 143
- Transitional Housing – 36
- Rapid Rehousing – 27
- Permanent Supportive Housing – 170

Note: Total numbers served in Emergency Shelter are lower due to the onset of COVID-19 and required social distancing.

However, calls to the Housing Crisis Hotline from Portsmouth residents during that same period identified various urgent needs for many households that were unable to be met:

- At imminent risk of homelessness – 730
- Literally homeless – 359
- At risk of homelessness (but not imminent) – 227
- Fleeing, or attempting to flee, domestic violence – 40

Additionally, specialized housing and programs for disconnected and homeless youth remain a barrier and data reveal that there is an increase in youth ages 18-24 accessing homeless services across the region. Funding agencies have also highlighted the need to address youth homelessness, which remains largely an invisible population.

Clearly resources around Homelessness Prevention need to be increased, in particular those that assist households not only in the Very Low Income category. On the other end of the continuum, expanding Permanent Supportive Housing and Rapid Rehousing units will allow for expediting an end to homelessness for many who are medically vulnerable and face a variety of barriers to achieve housing stability.

Key Recommendations

Portsmouth continues to build on what it does well, and incorporate sound policies to ensure they are good stewards of homeless services funding. However, being a smaller continuum, there are limitations to what the service providers can accomplish on their own. Partnering with the City and regional providers in new and innovative ways can promote more efficiency in housing those experiencing homelessness while also increasing resources for wrap-around services.

Some specific recommendations to meet the biggest gaps are noted below.

- ◆ Continue to **invest in Rapid Rehousing for single individuals** to meet the population need identified in the annual Longitudinal Systems Analysis report and Point in Time Count, and to ensure the highest impact of dollars spent.
- ◆ **Prioritize individuals and families experiencing literal homelessness** to ensure resources are reaching the most vulnerable clients.
- ◆ For less vulnerable clients, continue to **invest in prevention and diversion services**, reducing the number of individuals and families that experience homelessness all together.
- ◆ Invest funding and tax credits to **continue developing affordable housing units** for low-income and extremely low-income renter households. The Metropolitan Statistical Area current has 39 units of affordable and available housing per 100 renter households. (*National Low Income Housing Coalition*)
- ◆ Focus on strengthening the Crisis Response System in Portsmouth, which includes a robust Coordinated Entry System, engaging mainstream partners more strategically, and **establishing a permanent, year-round emergency shelter for single individuals**.