



**Loudoun County Continuum of Care**  
Results and Analysis from the Annual HUD Point-in-Time Count  
May 2019

## **Homelessness in Loudoun County, Virginia**

Prepared by the Loudoun County Continuum of Care.

### **About the Continuum of Care (CoC)**

The Continuum of Care is a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) mandated program designed to address the community-wide commitment to the goal of ending housing instability and homelessness in jurisdictions across the country. The Loudoun County Continuum of Care provides funding and administrative support for efforts by local nonprofits and local government programs that work to quickly rehouse families and individuals that are experiencing a housing crisis.

**Report Author:** Jennifer Hope, Loudoun County Continuum of Care Lead

### **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Loudoun County Continuum of Care is to provide a comprehensive, community-based plan to develop and deliver housing and related supportive services that address the needs of persons that are unstably housed or experiencing a housing crisis in order to help them achieve maximum self-sufficiency.

### **Continuum of Care Programs**

1. Cold Weather Shelter
2. Coordinated Entry Services
3. Drop-In Center
4. Emergency Shelter
5. Homeless Management and Information System
6. Homeless Prevention and Diversion
7. Permanent Supportive Housing
8. Rapid Re-Housing

### **Title VI Nondiscrimination Policy**

The Loudoun County Continuum of Care fully complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes and regulations prohibiting discrimination in all programs and activities. For more information or to obtain information in another language please contact the Office of the County Administrator, Public Affairs and Communications Division at (571)258-3282.

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## **Description of Homeless Services in Loudoun County, Virginia**

The Loudoun County Continuum of Care (CoC) provides a broad range of services to the community to assist residents that experience a housing crisis. With over 50 partner organizations the Continuum of Care is a network of community-based providers that work together to address the needs of households at-risk of becoming homeless or experience a housing crisis that resulted in homelessness. The following is a description of the Homeless Services provided by the Loudoun County Continuum of Care. All programs are accessible through the Coordinated Entry System.

### ❖ Cold Weather Shelter

A seasonal (November - March) emergency shelter that allows for residents in the community to have a warm place to go during winter months. Due to facility constraints there is currently no Cold Weather Shelter available for families needing to access this service. However, partners throughout the Northern Virginia region work diligently with our providers to ensure that no household is turned away.

### ❖ Coordinated Entry System Intake Line

Coordinated Entry is a streamlined system developed to ensure that all people experiencing a housing crisis have fair and equal access and are quickly identified, assessed, referred, and connected to housing and supportive services based on their strengths and presenting need. The Coordinated Entry System operates as the single point-of-entry for all homeless services.

### ❖ Drop-In Center

The Drop-In Center addresses the needs of residents in the community to provide a safe and dignified place for individuals experiencing homelessness to go during the day to take care of everyday needs and access services and supports. The Drop-In Center provides access to Case Management, Mental Health Services, Hot Meals, Shower and Laundry Facilities, Employment Assistance and other on-site services.

### ❖ Emergency Shelter

Emergency Shelter is designed to provide short-term emergency shelter for residents in the County that are experiencing a housing crisis that has resulted in homelessness. The program provides households with housing-focused case management services for employment, housing location assistance, transportation and other critical areas of service to assist with housing stabilization.

### ❖ Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Database

The Homeless Management Information System is an information technology database used to collect client-level and program-level data on the provision of housing and services to individuals and families. The system reports aggregated data to assist with program monitoring and evaluation, benchmarks and outcome measures and also fiscal management.

### ❖ Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)

Permanent Supportive Housing is permanent housing with indefinite leasing or rental assistance paired with supportive services. The program assists persons (or families) that have an adult or child with a documented disability, and individuals with a history of chronic homelessness. The PSH program differs from other supportive housing programs due to the federally mandated eligibility criteria.

❖ Homeless Prevention & Diversion Services

Prevention and Diversion Services are designed to assist individuals and families at risk of losing their housing. The program provides short-term financial assistance based on eligibility criteria long with case management services to stabilize housing, prevent rental evictions and divert households from entering the Emergency Shelter. The goal of the Homeless Prevention and Diversion program is assist households with stabilizing their housing to minimize the likelihood of emergency shelter entry.

❖ Rapid Re-Housing (RRH)

Rapid Re-Housing is an intervention, informed by a Housing First approach that is a critical part of our community’s Coordinated Entry System. The Rapid Re-Housing program quickly connects families and individuals to permanent housing through a tailored package of assistance that may include the use of time-limited financial assistance and targeted supportive services. Rapid Re-Housing also provides a Housing Locator to locate and advocate with landlords and property managers on behalf of households that may have significant barriers to housing.

❖ Outreach and Engagement

The Continuum of Care partners with the Project Assistance to Transition from Homelessness (PATH) Program in the Mental Health, Substance Abuse and Developmental Services Department to conduct outreach and engagement to persons in the community that are unsheltered and experiencing some type of serious mental health.

During the Fall of 2018, the Loudoun Homeless Services Center underwent renovations to update emergency shelter facilities. The Homeless Services Center supports the Emergency Shelter, Permanent Supportive Housing and several other programs that are available to residents of the community. All programs continued operations during the renovations. For the Housing Inventory Count (HIC), there was a temporary reduction of 14 beds during the renovation process. The timing of the renovations coincided with the Cold Weather Shelter which allowed for residents of the community to still access shelter accommodations.

Through strategic partnerships and support from community partners, Emergency Shelter services continue to be offered to community residents. The Housing Inventory table reflected below indicates the total number of beds and units that were available to residents of the community experiencing a housing crisis that has resulted in homelessness on the night of January 23, 2019.

**Table 1**

**Housing Inventory Count** (based on available bed capacity on the night of January 23, 2019)

Year-Rounds Beds <i>Emergency Shelter*</i>	Year-Round Beds <i>Transitional Housing</i>	Cold Weather Shelter Beds <i>November - March</i>	Permanent Supportive Housing Beds**	Domestic Violence <i>Emergency Shelter Beds</i>
67	38	23	24	12

*\*Reflects the temporary reduction of beds due to Emergency Shelter renovations*  
*\*\*Reflects two PSH units that were offline temporarily due to renovations*

**Enhancing Continuum of Care Services**

Over the past year, the Loudoun County Continuum of Care has made significant advances in providing comprehensive and inclusive services to expand the diversity of programming available to residents of the community. In November 2018, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced awards for the Family Unification Program (FUP). The Loudoun County Continuum of Care was one of only two CoC’s in the Commonwealth awarded these vouchers. Loudoun County received 10 Family Unification Program vouchers totaling \$136,834\*.

Family Unification Program vouchers provide rental assistance to households with children struggling to maintain stable housing. Additionally, this funding can be used to help provide stable housing for young adults (ages 18-24) who have aged-out of the foster care system.

\*U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development - HUD Archives: News Releases [https://www.hud.gov/press/press\\_releases\\_media\\_advisories/HUD\\_No\\_18\\_139](https://www.hud.gov/press/press_releases_media_advisories/HUD_No_18_139)

In August 2018, the Loudoun County Department of Family Services opened a second office to increase services and outreach to residents of Eastern Loudoun. With the second location, residents are able to access many of the same services available in Leesburg, with the added benefit of a reduction in travel time. As avenues of transportation continue to evolve, providing a second site for residents to access services, provides a unique opportunity to reduce challenges faced by households with limited transportation options.

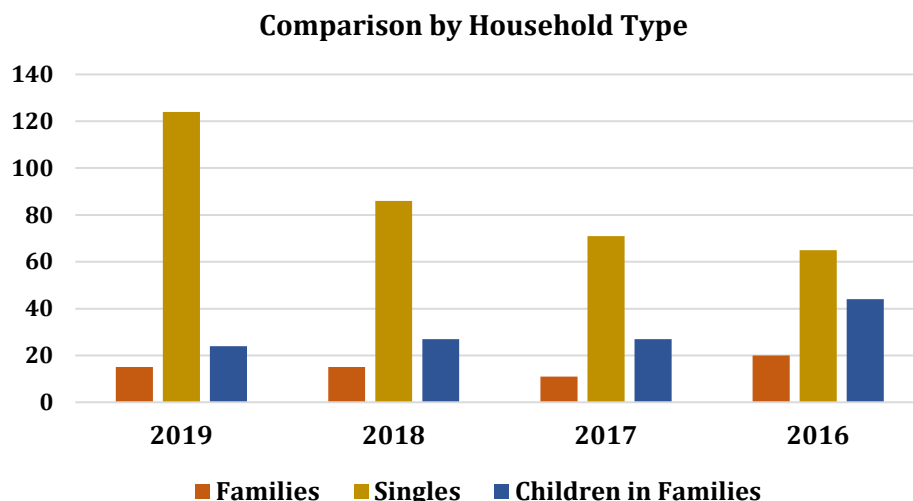
One of the programs staffed at the Eastern Loudoun site is the Information and Referral (I&R) Line which will serve as a single point-of-entry for community-wide information and referrals. The Department of Family Services works closely with community providers to ensure that residents in need of assistance are able to access needed resources in a comprehensive and efficient manner. The Information and Referral Line will serve all residents of the community and will streamline access to services for those seeking assistance.

### **Point-in-Time Count Results**

The Loudoun County Continuum of Care (CoC) along with CoC’s across the nation conducted the annual HUD Point-in-Time (PIT) Count on night of Wednesday, January 23, 2019. The methodology used for data analysis was provided through hardcopy surveys completed by staff at partnering organizations and throughout various county departments. There was a coordinated effort with local law enforcement, hospitals, nonprofits and others to ensure that unsheltered persons were connected to services and appropriate resources.

A total of 169 persons were experiencing homelessness in Loudoun County during the 2019 Point-in-Time Count. Of those, 124 were single adult households and 15 were identified as family households. There were 24 children and 21 adults represented in those households with a total of 45 persons in family households experiencing homelessness on that night. These numbers represent a 26% increase in the number of households that were homeless compared to the 2018 PIT Count. The chart below reflects comparison totals for the PIT Count by household type over the past four years:

**Figure 1**

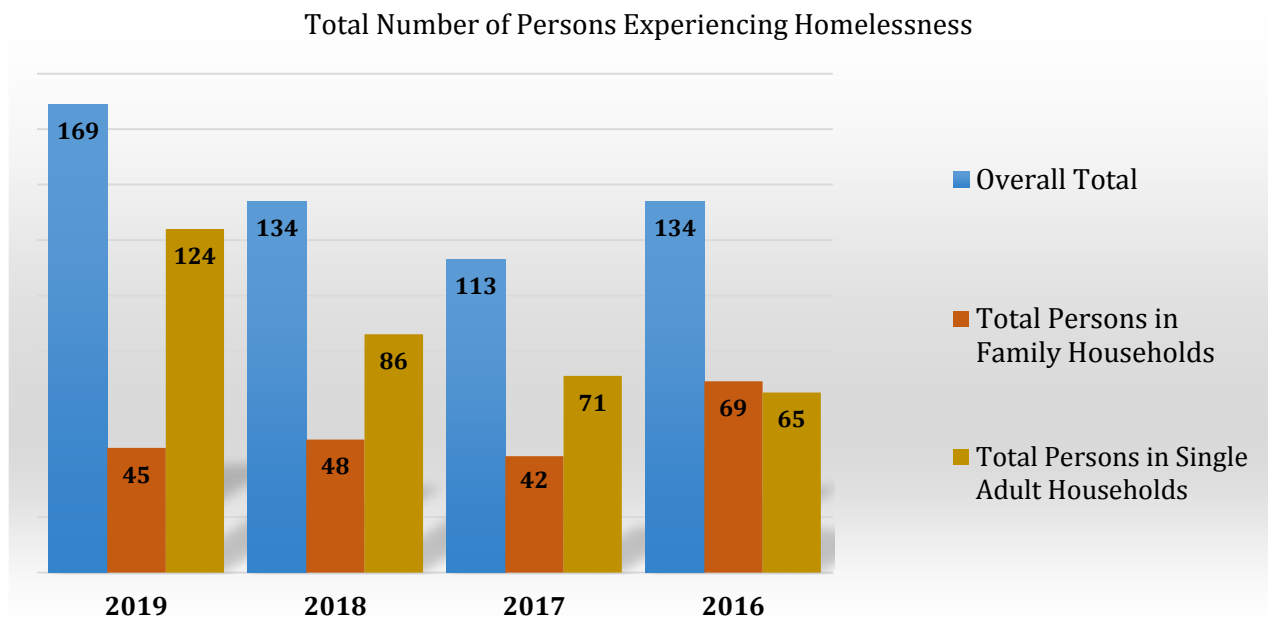


In Loudoun County, the overall number of persons experiencing homelessness on the night of the Point-in-Time Count has increased over the past three years. However, for families experiencing homelessness, the totals continue to decline.

The efforts of the Point-in-Time Count reflect two categories of households experiencing homelessness. The first category is households that are sheltered, yet still meet the criteria of homeless per the HUD definition (e.g. residing in an emergency shelter, Transitional Housing program or hotel/motel being paid for by a third party). The second category is persons that are unsheltered and residing in places not intended for human habitation (e.g. tents, vehicles, parking garages, etc.). Loudoun County currently has two Emergency Shelters (ES) and one Domestic Violence (DV) shelter.

The following chart depicts the overall count for persons experiencing homelessness in Loudoun County over the past four years:

**Figure: 2**



There are several reasons that may have contributed to the increase, most notably is the increase in the number of service providers that contributed to this year's outreach efforts. While the Continuum of Care supports homeless services throughout the county, there are numerous nonprofits and other organizations that provide services to residents that may be experiencing a housing crisis that has resulted in homelessness. Faith-based organizations and local nonprofits play a significant role in assisting households that are struggling to maintain stable housing, by providing resources, financial assistance and advocacy to meet the unique needs of this target population.

On the night of the Point-in-Time Count, several Outreach Teams canvassed the community to assist residents that were unsheltered homeless. There was an overall increase in the number of unsheltered residents that were sleeping in their vehicles and outdoors. During the 2019 PIT Count, there were 71 single adults households identified as unsheltered homeless on the night of the Count. As in previous years, there were no unsheltered families located in the County. The primary

goal in conducting outreach during the winter season is to ensure that any resident that is unsheltered is aware of services available and encourage them to come in from the elements.

Unsheltered Outreach teams spoke with many individuals throughout the community that were unsheltered on the night of the count, to complete surveys and connect individuals with resources. Teams from Loudoun Abused Women’s Shelter, Good Shepherd Alliance, Mobile Hope, the Windy Hill Foundation, Loudoun County Department of Family Services, and the Department of Mental Health, Substance Abuse and Development Services worked together to locate and assist residents that were unsheltered by providing toiletries, non-perishable food items and other resources. Below are a few pictures taken during the unsheltered outreach:



Individual sleeping at a fast food restaurant.

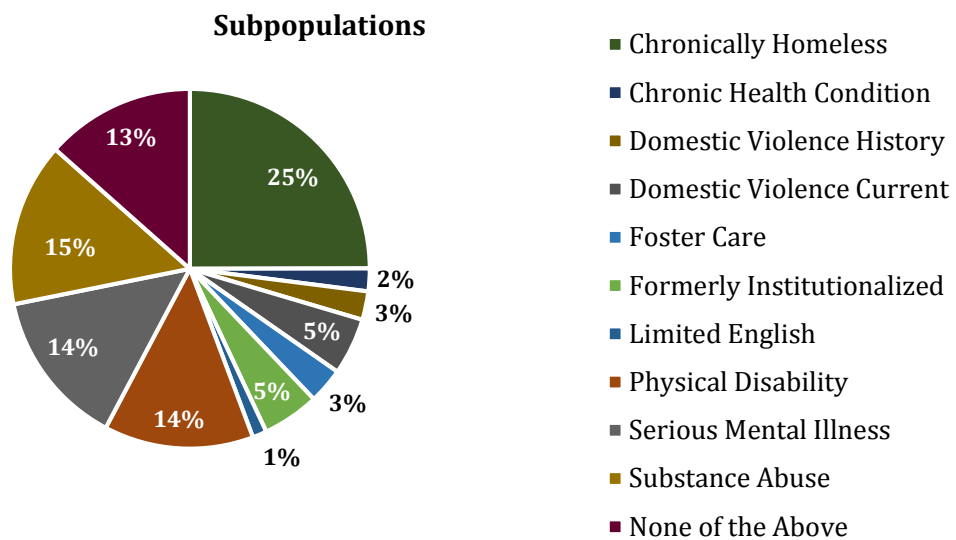


Tent of an individual sleeping outdoors in Leesburg.

### **Demographics and Subpopulations**

The most commonly reported subpopulation among households (including both single and family households) for the 2019 PIT Report is chronically homeless, with a total of 37 households. The second highest reported subpopulation among all households is Substance Abuse with a total of 23 households, and the third most common is households where the Head of Household has a Serious Mental Illness diagnosis (SMI), with a total of 22 households. Below is a breakdown of subpopulations reported during the 2019 PIT Count:

**Figure 3**





The subpopulations reflected in the report represent all adults in each household, including both single adults and families. Children in family households are not reflected in the total count of subpopulation results. The largest subpopulation decrease for the 2019 PIT report in single adult households, were households that became homeless as a direct result of domestic violence, with an 80% decrease. The largest decrease in subpopulations for adults in family households is Serious Mental Illness with a 100% decrease. Specific comparisons of subpopulations between the 2019 and 2018 Point-in-Time Count are provided below.

**Table: 2**

<b>Subpopulations*</b>						
<b>Category</b>	<b>Single Adult Households</b>		<b>Percent Change</b>	<b>Adults in Families</b>		<b>Percent Change</b>
	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>		<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>	
Chronically Homeless	37	22	68%	2	2	0
Chronic Health Condition	3	7	-57%	0	0	0
Domestic Violence (History)	3	6	-50%	1	14	-92%
Domestic Violence (Current Episode)	2	10	-80%	6	5	20%
Foster Care	5	3	66%	0	0	0
Formerly Institutionalized	8	7	14%	0	0	0
Limited English	1	0	∞	1	2	-50%
Physical Disability	18	11	63%	2	5	-60%
Serious Mental Illness	22	16	37.5%	0	1	-100%
Substance Abuse	23	10	130%	0	0	0
None of the Above	12	30	-60%	9	8	12.5%

*\*More than one person may identify with multiple subpopulations*

For the past several years, there have been questions as to the number of households that may not be considered homeless per the HUD definition, yet are in living situations that are unstable, sporadic or temporary. For 2019, the Point-in-Time Count committee included the subcategory of couch-surfing on the PIT Count survey. Couch-surfing is typically a temporary stay in a series of other people's homes (e.g. friends, family, co-workers, etc.), by making use of improvised sleeping arrangements.

During the 2019 PIT Count, there were 22 households that were counted as meeting the criteria of couch-surfing. Of households that were couch-surfing on the night of the count, 9 were family households and 13 were single adult households. Although reporting the number of households that are couch-surfing is not federally required, including this number helps to create a clearer picture of how many households in the community are having difficulty stabilizing their housing. It is important to note that the Point-in-Time Count is a one-day snapshot of residents in the community experiencing a housing crisis that has resulted in homelessness and most likely, does not adequately represent the full scope of the issue.

### Employment

Of the 124 single adult households that were counted, 50 of those individuals were employed or 41.6%. While individuals experiencing homelessness may be employed, it is often difficult to secure housing within the county that is sustainable on a single income. Many single adult households are working two or three part-time jobs to make ends meet. With limited housing options and few single resident occupancy (SRO) units, many single adults are faced with minimal options.

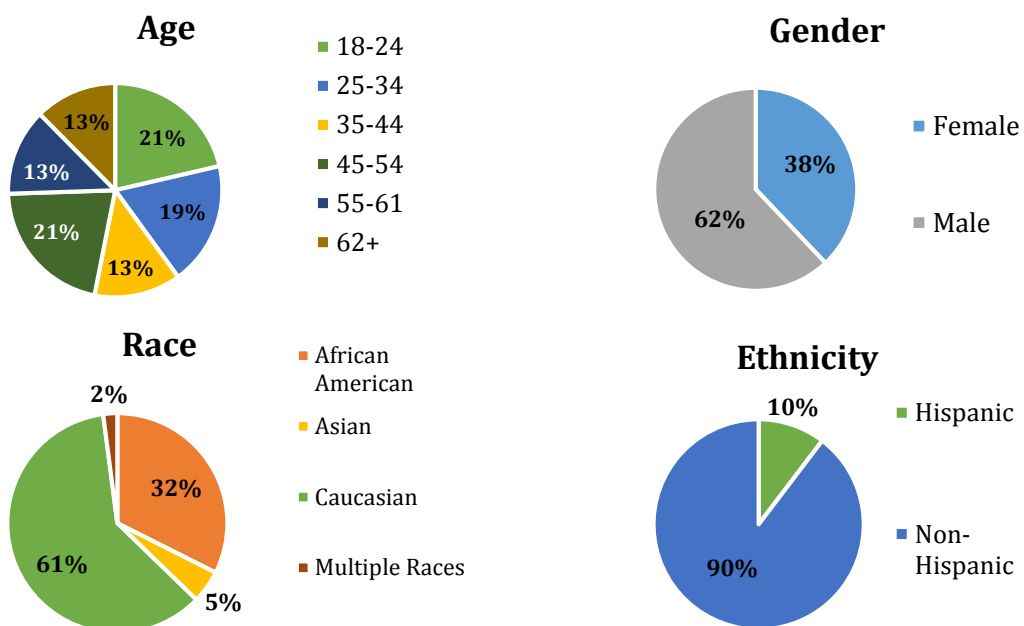
Of the 15 households with children, there was a total of 13 Heads of Households that were employed or 86.6%. This number remains unchanged from the 2018 Point-in-Time Count in which

13 Heads of Household were also employed for households with children. While employment income alone cannot fully support housing costs, many families and single adults also connect with mainstream benefits to help with household needs. Supplemental services such as Social Security Disability Income (SSDI), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) and other programs often contribute to the overall household income.

The Point-in-Time Count gathers demographic data to assess the diversity of households experiencing homelessness on the night of the count. The following charts indicate several categories included in the PIT Count. These data points are required by HUD and reflect only those persons that were included in the 2019 PIT Count as either sheltered or unsheltered.

Figure 4

**Household Demographics**



**Housing Programs and Supportive Services**

*Permanent Housing*

Permanent Housing is housing that households are able to access and maintain with little to no outside support. The ultimate goal for all Continuum of Care (CoC) programs is to ensure that households that access homeless services receive the necessary tools while enrolled in the various programs, to help them achieve self-sufficiency upon program exit. All CoC programs, utilize a Housing First approach that aims to ensure stable housing first and then provide wraparound services to support the household in remaining housed.

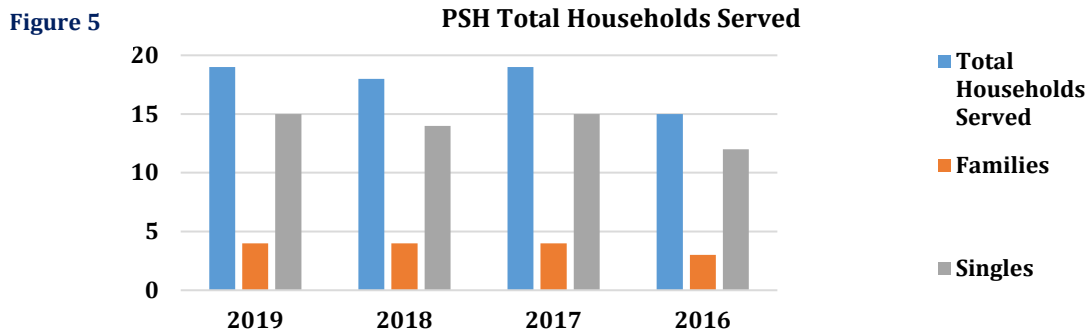
There are many conversations across the region addressing the affordable housing need. However, the language of 'affordable' housing tends to be subjective based on the specific demographics of the population. For households exiting homelessness, affordability and accessibility often go hand-in-hand. Many households accessing services are struggling to cover rising housing costs while earning minimum wage salaries.

**Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)**

The Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) program is a federally funded program designed to serve residents of the community that have a history of chronic homelessness and a documented long-term disability. Residents enrolled in the program are able to remain stably housed with ongoing supportive services to ensure that they remain connected to needed resources. Permanent Supportive Housing is a long-term program where case management services are combined with mental/ behavioral health support to provide holistic care to program participants.

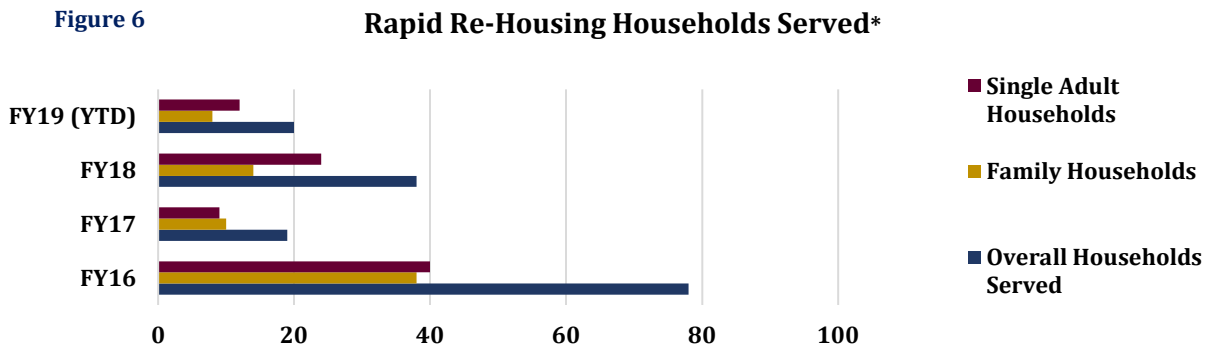
Loudoun County currently has 17 Permanent Supportive Housing units with a total of 24 beds within those units. There has been no increase in the number of Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) beds and/or units during FY19. The program accepts both single adults and families and is open to residents of Loudoun County. The program is operated under contract with Volunteers of America Chesapeake in conjunction with the Loudoun County Department of Family Services and Loudoun County Mental Health, Substance Abuse and Developmental Services. The program has 8 units that are located on-site at the Loudoun Homeless Services Center and 9 units that are located throughout the community.

Below is a chart reflecting the total number of households served in the PSH program over the past few years:



**Rapid Re-Housing (RRH)**

The Rapid Re-Housing program is a national best practice model that aims to transition households from homelessness to housing quickly and with needed supports. The main criteria for the Rapid Re-Housing program is that the household meet the HUD definition of literally homeless to enroll in the program. Loudoun County currently has one (1) Rapid Re-Housing program that is provided through contract with a local nonprofit organization. The RRH program also provides Housing Location assistance to work with households in locating and securing viable housing options. Below is an overview of households served by the program over the past several years:



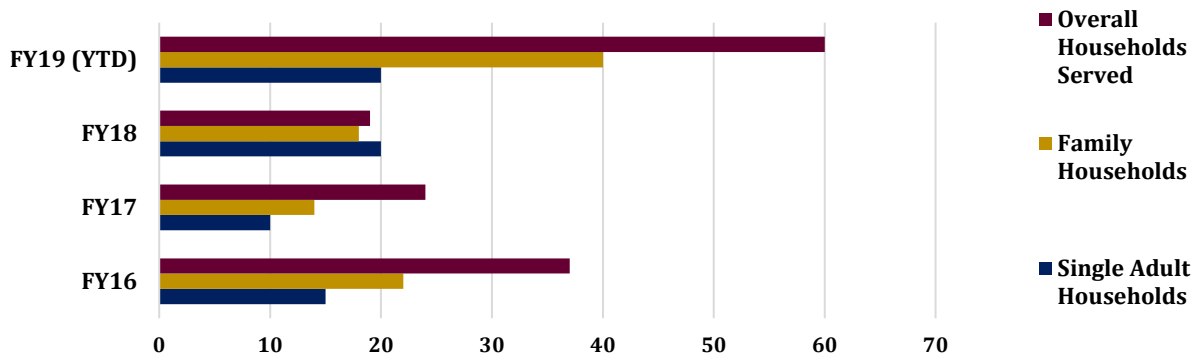
\*Households served includes financial assistance and case management services.

*Homeless Prevention and Diversion*

The Homeless Prevention and Diversion program is a program that works to reduce the number of households that become literally homeless and enroll in the emergency shelter program. The goal of the Homeless Prevention and Diversion program is to prevent community residents from entering shelter by providing case management along with short-term financial assistance to help families and single adults remain housed. The program focuses on community outreach and engagement to ensure that households facing rental eviction or displacement are able to connect with case management staff and receive needed assistance and support.

Another component of the program is to divert households that are experiencing a housing crisis (expected to lose housing within 14 days) from becoming homeless. Diversion may include mediation with family or friends, advocating with landlords or property managers and many other strategies designed to keep households stably housed. Prevention and Diversion case management is designed to prevent households from becoming homeless and divert them from enrolling in the Emergency Shelter through proactive engagement and strategic advocacy in a timely fashion.

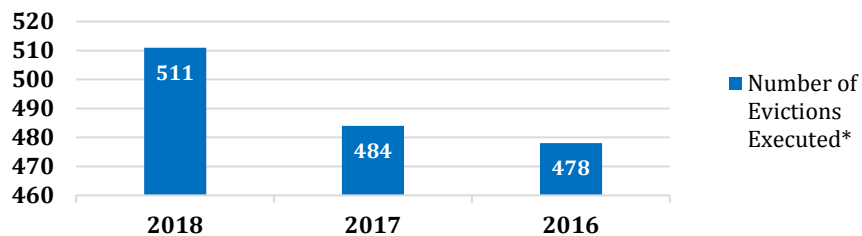
**Figure 7 Homeless Prevention and Diversion Program Households Served\***



*\*Households served includes financial assistance and case management services.*

While rental evictions are not the leading cause of homelessness, it does impact a household’s ability to secure housing moving forward after an eviction has been noted on credit reports. The Homeless Prevention and Diversion program works with tenants, landlords and property managers to prevent homelessness and rental evictions, by providing case management, outreach services, community engagement and short-term assistance to help households remain stably housed. Information provided by county resources reflects, the number of evictions served in Loudoun County over the past few years.

**Figure 8 Countywide Evictions by Year**



*\*Totals reflect number of persons per unit, not individual properties and includes foreclosures, evictions for lease violations and tenants in arrears of rent.*

Loudoun County has a limited number of Transitional Housing (TH) units through partnership with local nonprofits that provide supportive housing with wraparound services. There are currently six Transitional Housing units with a total of 38 beds available for families and single adult households. With a decrease in federal funding for Transitional Housing programs, there is a need for strategic partnerships to help fill the gap of supportive housing for households that may need additional time to stabilize and increase their income.

**Older Adults, Transition-Age Youth and Unmet Housing Needs**

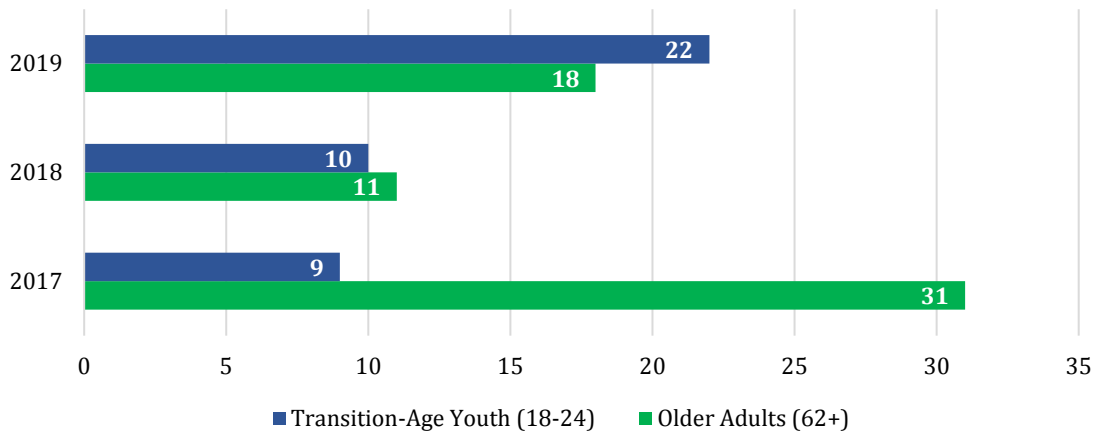
There continues to be an increase in the number of Older Adults (62+) accessing homeless services. For 2019 PIT Count, 18 individuals were included that were 62 or older. The most senior single adult included in the count was an 80 year old gentlemen located living out of his car. While the youngest individual included in this year’s Count was a 19 year old single adult enrolled in a Transitional Housing program.

The housing needs of both populations can vary based on the unique household needs, however one consistency in both demographics is the need for stable income to assist with housing costs. While some Older Adults may be limited in terms of increasing their income due to physical limitations or health issues, Transition-Age Youth are often just launching in terms of establishing credit, exploring a career path and navigating the process of starting to live independently.

The Continuum of Care partners with youth services organizations within the community and throughout the region to serve youth and young adults that are on brink of homelessness or have become homeless due to a variety of circumstances. Services for those 62 and up includes collaboration with numerous community based organizations to provide supportive services and assistance to Older Adults in the community in need of stabilizing their housing. Below is a chart reflecting the number of Older Adults and Transition-Age Youth experiencing homelessness over the past few years as indicated in the Point-in-Time Count:

**Figure 9**

**Older Adults and Transition-Age Youth Experiencing Homelessness**

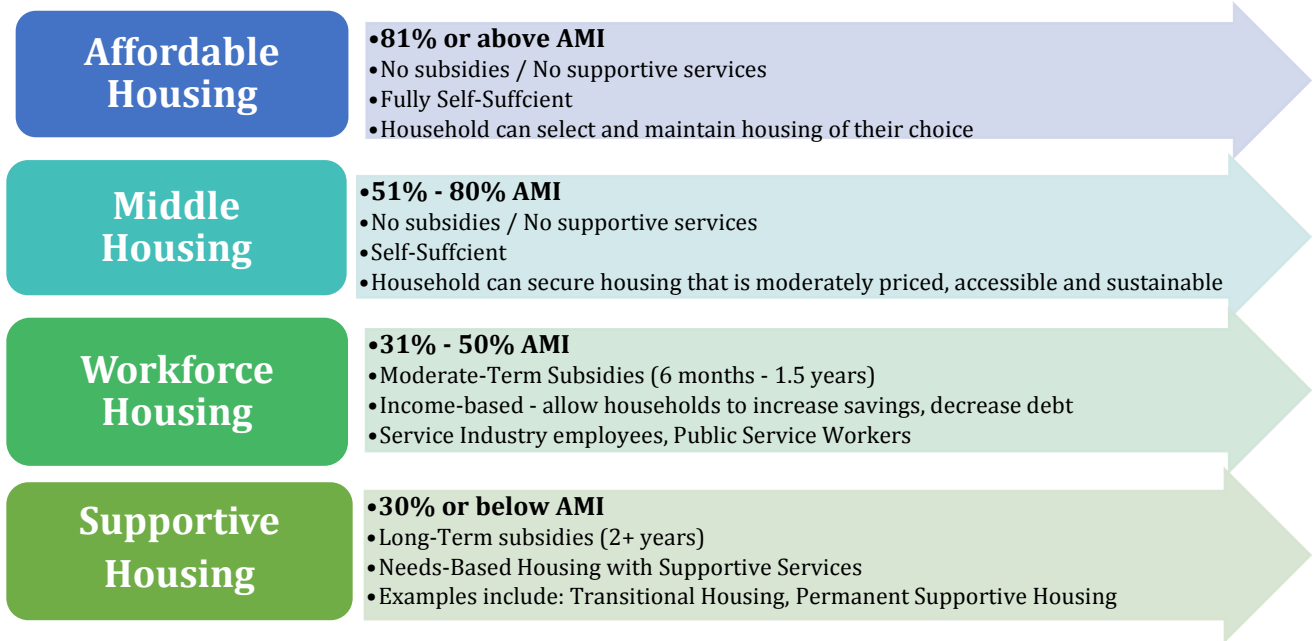


While there are several programs to assist community residents in need of housing such as the Affordable Dwelling Unit (ADU) Program and the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program, many of the households accessing Continuum of Care programs do not qualify for those programs due to various barriers and long waitlists. The language of affordable housing tends to be subjective based

on the population demographic. Redefining what ‘affordable housing’ means in real world investments and housing stock diversity could be as simple as restructuring operational definitions for addressing a communities housing needs such as:

**Operational Definitions of Affordable Housing**

Figure 10



Addressing the unmet housing needs for households at or below 30% Area Median Income (AMI), is a critical component to reducing the number of persons experiencing a housing crisis. No community is immune to homelessness. In order to adequately address housing deficiencies, localities should explore diversification of housing stock to meet the needs of all community residents.