

# HOMELESSNESS IN WASHTENAW COUNTY

CONTINUUM OF CARE 2018 ANNUAL REPORT

MORGHAN WILLIAMS BOYDSTON, HUMAN SERVICES MANAGER

OFFICE OF COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



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# BACKGROUND

Wherever possible, community resources are used to both prevent instances of homelessness and divert clients from accessing shelter through the identification of alternative housing resources. When a housing crisis or homelessness does occur, our community offers a range of programs for clients, such as:

- **Homelessness Prevention:** direct financial assistance for move-in costs, back rent payments, and other related expenses to help clients regain or achieve stability
- **Emergency Shelter:** provides temporary shelter to those with no identifiable alternative
- **Rapid Re-housing:** short- and/or medium-term housing assistance designed to help clients quickly exit homelessness and return to permanent housing
- **Permanent Supportive Housing:** long-term housing assistance coupled with a range of supportive services

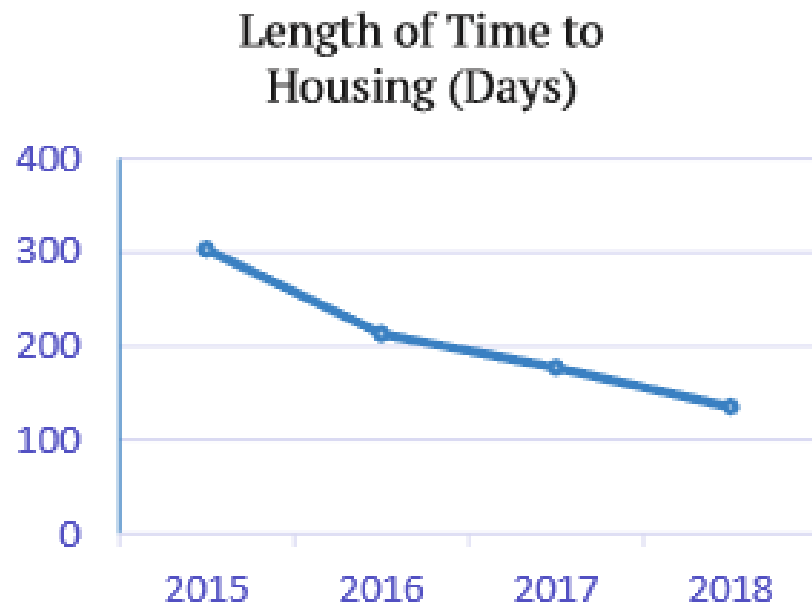


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## 2018 KEY TAKE AWAYS

***The CoC is housing people faster than ever before.***



When homelessness does occur, the CoC goal is that it is brief and non-recurring. CoC members work to ensure the households served are housed as quickly as possible, resulting in a 55% reduction in the time between entering and exiting the system since 2015.



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## 2018 KEY TAKE AWAYS

### *Interventions are producing positive outcomes.*

Interventions such as prevention assistance, rapid rehousing, and permanent supportive housing require a great deal of collaboration between Continuum of Care members. In 2018, coordinated entry, and wraparound services ensured individuals are housed more efficiently and remained housed for longer.

844

Total persons housed in 2018

80%

Remained housed of those housed in 2016

38%

Decrease in people experiencing homelessness for the first time since 2015



## 2018 KEY TAKE AWAYS

*There is still a lot of work to do in our community.*

**762**  
**people**

As of December 31st, 2018, there were 762 people experiencing homelessness on the waitlist for housing placement. The primary driver keeping individuals on this waitlist is a high demand for CoC resources (e.g., permanent supportive housing and rapid re-housing) paired with the lack of affordable housing units, housing vouchers, rental assistance, and other similar tools that can be used to house low-income individuals.



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## Overall Numbers

Number of People  
Experiencing Literal  
Homelessness

**3,312**

Change since 2017: **2% Increase**  
Change since 2015: **4% Decrease**

Average Length  
Between Entering and  
Exiting the System

**135 Days**

Change since 2017: **24% Decrease**  
Change since 2015: **55% Decrease**

People Returning to  
Homelessness after  
Being Housed

**20%**

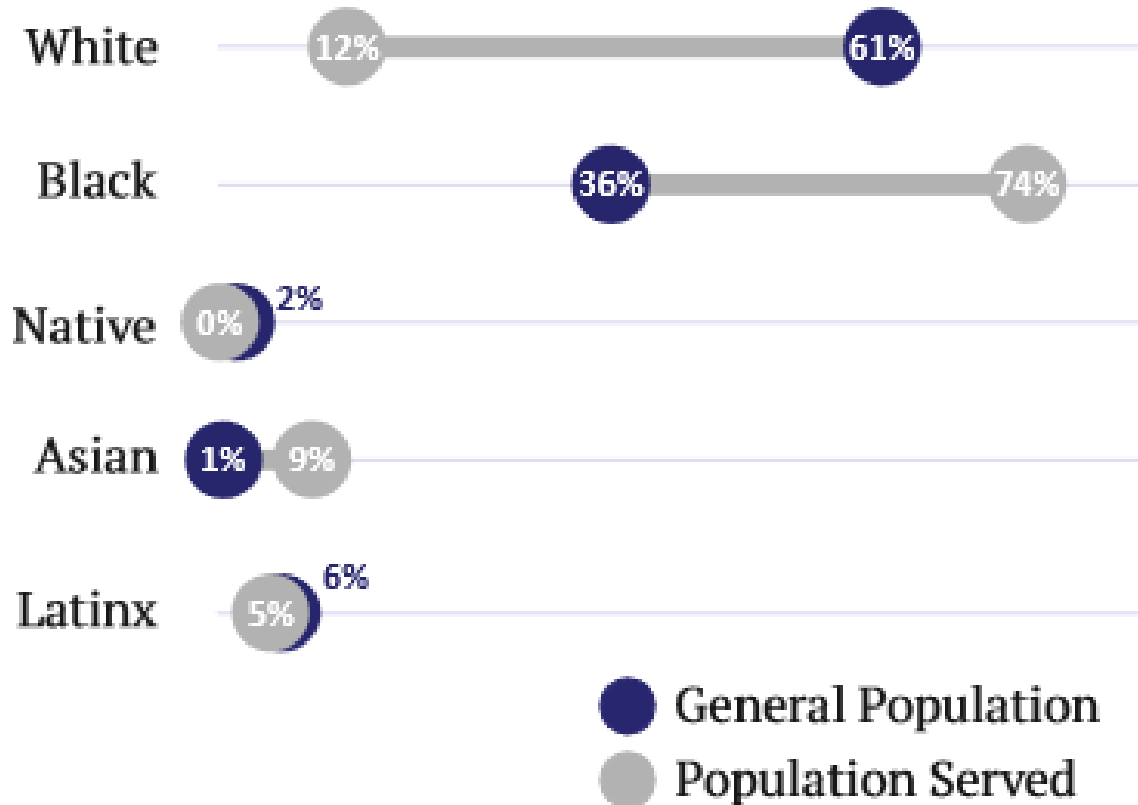
Change since 2017: **Increase from 18%**  
Change since 2015: **Decrease from 38%**



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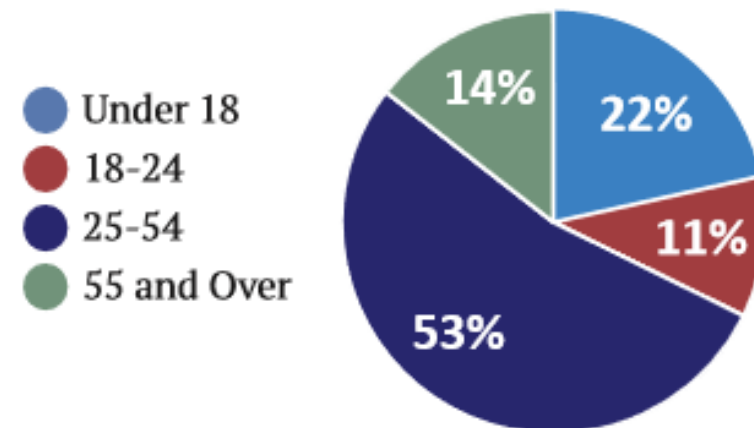
## Race/Ethnicity\*\*



## Gender



## Age



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## Homelessness Prevention

**372** Stabilized through Prevention

Key Stat:  
Average Assistance

**\$503** was the average amount spent per person to prevent an episode of homelessness. Prevention usually provides a limited amount of cash assistance to cover back-rent owed or move-in costs for households that will be able to stay in their housing after a one-time assistance. This assistance is typically paired with a client contribution, as well as assistance finding other community resources, such as Barrier Busters. Given the current state of the housing market

in Washtenaw County, these services and supports are more important than ever.



## Emergency Shelter

**764** Households Served

Key Outcome:  
Total Nights of Shelter Provided

**79,930** is the total number of nights of shelter provided to individuals and families. The number of beds available increased by 105 during winter months when it can be dangerous to sleep outside. Along with meeting basic needs for shelter and food, shelter staff provide case management, working with clients to obtain identification, increase income, and find housing. In 2018, 47% of individuals who utilized a shelter exited to permanent housing. This is a decrease from 53% exiting in 2017.

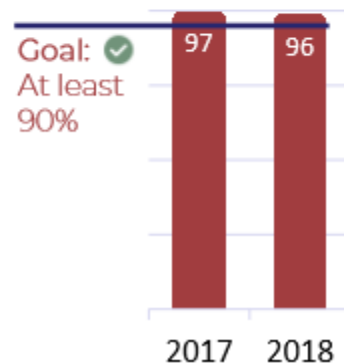


## Permanent Supportive Housing

**98** Households Placed

Key Outcome:  
Two-Year Housing Retention

**96%** of households placed in permanent supportive housing in 2016 remained stably housed through 2018. Given the high level of need of the population served by permanent supportive housing (see below), this extremely high retention rate speaks volumes to the success of the partners at engaging and meeting the needs of clients. The make-up of these clients was almost evenly split between individuals and families.



## Rapid Re-housing

**346** Households Rehoused

Key Outcome:  
Days Before Re-housed

**57** days was how long it took on average to get a household housed through rapid re-housing, 25% faster than 2017. The system tries to place everyone in permanent housing within 90 days, and rapid rehousing is helping us meet that goal. However, we know that 57 days is still a long time for families to be in shelters, sleeping in a car or on the street, so we will continue to increase efficiencies to reach the national standard of 30 days.





**Ongoing Goal: Ending Veteran Homelessness**

**Progress Made in 2018:** Veteran homelessness declined 38% since 2016 and is at its lowest level since 2015.

**Moving Forward:** Strive to meet the federal criteria and benchmarks for ending veteran homelessness in 2019 through continued focus on this issue.



**Ongoing Goal: Ending Chronic Homelessness**

**Progress Made in 2018:** Chronic homelessness declined 11% since 2016

**Moving Forward:** Continue connecting people experiencing chronic homelessness to housing and other resources more quickly by ensuring all clients have identification, and other needed documentation.



**Ongoing Goal: Increase Funding and Resources**

**Progress Made in 2018:** The CoC added 22 PSH units at New Parkridge in Ypsilanti and received 45 new vouchers for non-elderly disabled adults & 32 vouchers through the Family Unification Program.

**Moving Forward:** Continue to coordinate with CoC providers and community partners to find new resources and housing to meet the need in Washtenaw County.





### **Ongoing Goal: Improving Youth Services**

**Progress Made in 2018:** In 2018, the CoC formed an official Youth Homelessness Committee to explore how to better meet the needs of youth and young adults ages 18-24 in Washtenaw County. The CoC applied for new resources to serve youth, and incorporated youth appropriate assessment into the coordinated entry system.

**Moving Forward:** Continue to seek new resources, coordinate with local youth boards to better understand youth homelessness, and employ best practices for finding youth during the annual homeless count.



### **Completed Goal: Coordinating with Law Enforcement**

**Progress Made in 2018:** The CoC kicked off its first ever Law Enforcement and Outreach workgroup to help coordinate and improve our community's response to homelessness, including a focus on improving discharge processes. It also coordinated with Law Enforcement around our annual homeless census. Having made significant strides in 2018, this will be moved off our list of central goals to focus in other areas moving forward, though we will continue strengthening this partnership.



### **New Goal: Increased Focus on Racial Equity**

**Background:** The CoC conducted its first ever racial disparity analysis, matching data on persons served to the Census and other public data to begin to understand how racial disparities impact homelessness in Washtenaw County. In the coming year, we will conduct focus groups to gain insight into the lived experience of people of color served by the CoC and use our findings to begin exploring steps to reduce the impact of racial disparities in our system.



### **New Goal: Reforming Diversion Resources**

**Background:** Diversion is a creative, flexible approach that encourages and helps clients to come up with their own solutions right away, instead of waiting for openings in shelter or a housing program. With shelter waitlists growing, in 2018 the CoC identified a need for more effective Diversion practices across our Coordinated Entry System, and will work towards solutions moving forward.



thank you!

## Partners:

Ann Arbor Housing Commission  
Avalon Housing  
Catholic Social Services of Washtenaw County  
Child Care Network  
Fair Housing Center  
Faith in Action  
Housing Bureau for Seniors  
Interfaith Hospitality Network at Alpha House  
Legal Services of South Central Michigan  
Michigan Ability Partners  
Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

## OCED COC Staff:

Crystal Balogh, HMIS System Administrator  
Andrew Kraemer, Data & Evaluation Specialist  
Anna O'Toole, Human Services Policy Specialist  
Morgan Williams Boydston, Human Services Manager  
Teresa Gillotti, OCED Director

Ozone House  
SafeHouse Center  
The Salvation Army of Washtenaw County  
Shelter Association of Washtenaw County  
SOS Community Services  
Unified HIV Health and Beyond  
Veterans Affairs Ann Arbor Healthcare System  
Washtenaw County Community Mental Health  
Washtenaw Housing Alliance  
Ypsilanti Housing Commission

## Funders:

Michigan State Housing Development Authority  
US Department of Housing and Urban Development  
Washtenaw Coordinated Funders

To Learn more about this work, visit:  
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