



NEW YORK CITY HOMELESSNESS The Basic Facts

- In recent years, homelessness in New York City has reached **the highest levels since the Great Depression of the 1930s**. [1] [2]
- In February 2016, there were **60,410 homeless people**, including **14,699 homeless families with 23,783 homeless children**, sleeping each night in the New York City municipal shelter system. Families comprise just over three-quarters of the homeless shelter population.
- Over the course of the last City fiscal year (FY 2015), **more than 109,000 different homeless men, women, and children** slept in the New York City municipal shelter system. This includes **over 42,000 different homeless New York City children**.
- The number of homeless New Yorkers sleeping each night in municipal shelters is now **92 percent higher** than it was ten years ago.
- Research shows that the **primary cause of homelessness, particularly among families, is lack of affordable housing**. Surveys of homeless families have identified the following major immediate, triggering causes of homelessness: **eviction; doubled-up or severely overcrowded housing; domestic violence; job loss; and hazardous housing conditions**. [3] [4] [5]
- Research shows that, compared to homeless families, homeless single adults have much **higher rates of serious mental illness, addiction disorders, and other severe health problems**. [6]
- Each night **thousands of unsheltered homeless people** sleep on New York City streets, in the subway system, and in other public spaces. There is no accurate measurement of New York City's unsheltered homeless population, and recent **City surveys significantly underestimate the number of unsheltered homeless New Yorkers**.
- Studies show that the **large majority of street homeless New Yorkers are people living with mental illness or other severe health problems**. [7] [8]
- **African-American and Latino New Yorkers are disproportionately affected by homelessness**. Approximately 58 percent of New York City homeless shelter residents are African-American, 31 percent are Latino, 8 percent are white, less than 1 percent are Asian-American, and 3 percent are of unknown race/ethnicity.

References

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- [7] R. Kuhn and D. Culhane, "Applying Cluster Analysis to Test a Typology of Homelessness by Pattern of Shelter Utilization," *American Journal of Community Psychology*, vol. 26, no. 2, 1998.
- [8] A. Levitt, D. Culhane, J. DeGenova, P. O'Quinn and J. Bainbridge, "Health and Social Characteristics of Homeless Adults in Manhattan Who Were Chronically or Not Chronically Unsheltered," *Psychiatric Services*, vol. 60, no. 7, 2009.

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