



SAN MATEO COUNTY ONE DAY HOMELESS COUNT AND SURVEY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

May 2017

COUNTY OF SAN MATEO
HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

2017 SAN MATEO COUNTY ONE DAY HOMELESS COUNT AND SURVEY

This executive summary provides an overview of key results from the 2017 San Mateo County One Day Homeless Count and Survey (“count”). The San Mateo County Human Services Agency’s Center on Homelessness coordinates the count in collaboration with community and County partners. The 2017 count was conducted in the early morning hours of January 26, 2017. Approximately 350 volunteers consisting of community-based providers, members of the public, and County staff, assisted by homeless guides, fanned out by foot and car to conduct an observational count and surveys of homeless persons observed in each census tract in the County. The County conducts the count every two years and the results provide one source of data, among many others, to help the County and its partners assess how to best serve homeless households and assist them with returning to housing as quickly as possible. The results are also submitted to the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), which then compiles information about the homeless counts nationwide.

NUMBER OF HOMELESS PEOPLE

The 2017 count determined that there were **1,253 homeless people in San Mateo County on the night of January 25, 2017** comprised of:

- **637 unsheltered** homeless people (living on streets, in cars, in RVs, in tents/encampments) and,
- **616 sheltered** homeless people (in emergency shelters and transitional housing programs).

The 2017 results show a 16% decrease in the overall homeless count compared to 2015, with the biggest decreases made in reduced numbers of people living on the streets and in encampments.

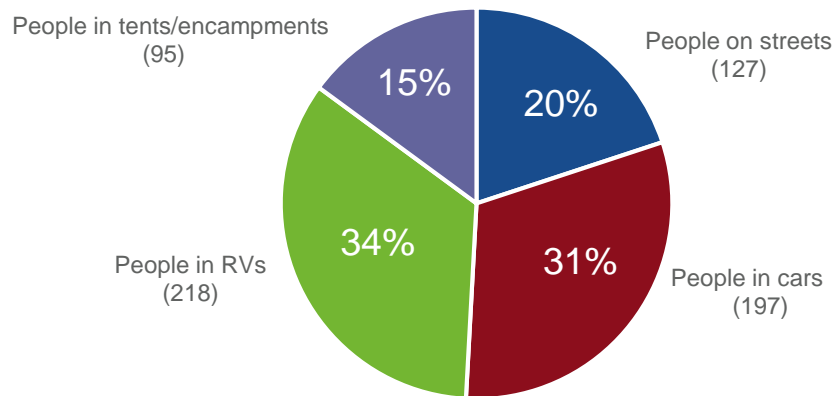
The table below provides information on the number of homeless people, including both sheltered and unsheltered people, from the counts from 2009 to 2017.



There was an 18% decrease in the number of **unsheltered** people in 2017 compared to 2015. The decrease was accounted for by fewer people being counted on the street (a 62% decrease) and tents (a 30% decrease), although there was an increase in the number of people counted in RVs (a 44% increase) and in the number of people in cars (a 25% increase).

The unsheltered count also included information about the locations where unsheltered people slept on the previous night: on the street, in cars, in RVs, or in tents/encampments.

Locations of Unsheltered Persons in 2017 Count
n=637



The **sheltered** count also decreased in comparison to 2015, with a 13% reduction in the number of sheltered homeless people. The total number of sheltered people went down from 708 in 2015 to 616 in 2017, with decreases shown in both the number of people in emergency shelter (a 17% decrease) and transitional housing (an 11% decrease).

A major change that impacted the count of people in emergency shelter from 2015 to 2017 was the removal of the Mental Health Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program-Domiciliary Care for Homeless Veterans (VADOM Program), which is a program of the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). HUD issued instructions to no longer include the VADOM in the emergency shelter count after 2015. Another major impact to the reduction in the emergency shelter count was a lower number of persons in the Motel Voucher Program.

The reduction of persons in transitional housing is due to the reclassification of the Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV) beds. In 2015, HCHV beds were classified as transitional housing beds but in 2017 the HCHV beds were classified as emergency shelter beds in order to align with the VA and HUD classification. Therefore, these beds shifted from being counted as transitional housing beds to emergency shelter beds.

NUMBER OF HOMELESS PEOPLE IN INSTITUTIONS

The count also collected data in a variety of institutions on the night of January 25, 2017, including hospitals, the County correctional facility, and inpatient alcohol and drug treatment programs, to determine the number of people who were homeless upon entry. The data showed that the number of people who were homeless upon entry to the institution was 298, up by 3.1% from the 289 reported in 2015.

In previous counts in San Mateo County, the institutions count was included in the sheltered count. Starting with this 2017 count report, data from institutions has now been removed from the sheltered count and is being reported separately. In order to provide trend data over time, the institutions count has been removed from the sheltered count in all data in this report, including data from previous years.

While data collected via the institutions count is used for local planning, it is not included in the data submitted to HUD, therefore this change aligns the data in this report with the data submitted to HUD.

NUMBER OF HOMELESS HOUSEHOLDS

The 1,253 homeless people (including both sheltered and unsheltered) counted comprised **902 households**.

Overall, the number of homeless households decreased by 35%, with a substantial decrease in adult only households, as well as a decrease in family households.

The number of homeless unsheltered families decreased by 48%, from 35 families in 2015 to 19 families in 2017.

COMPARISON OVER TIME OF HOMELESS PERSONS

The table below provides information about the count since 2009. The trend shows that the total number of people is at its lowest count since 2009. After 2009, there were increases in 2011 and 2013, but a steady decrease from 2013 through 2017.

| LOCATION | 2009 | 2011 | 2013 | 2015 | 2017 | NET CHANGE (2015 TO 2017) | % CHANGE (2015 TO 2017) |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Unsheltered Count | | | | | | | |
| People on streets | 422 | 466 | 353 | 331 | 127 | -204 | -62% |
| People in cars | 96 | 126 | 231 | 157 | 197 | 40 | 25% |
| People in RVs | 170 | 246 | 392 | 151 | 218 | 67 | 44% |
| People in tents/encampments | 115 | 324 | 323 | 136 | 95 | -41 | -30% |
| Subtotal Unsheltered Count | 803 | 1,162 | 1,299 | 775 | 637 | -138 | -18% |
| Sheltered Count | | | | | | | |
| People in Emergency Shelters | 341 | 258 | 272 | 254 | 211 | -43 | -17% |
| People in Transitional Housing | 403 | 441 | 431 | 454 | 405 | -49 | -11% |
| Subtotal Sheltered Count* | 744 | 699 | 703 | 708 | 616 | -92 | -13% |
| Total Homeless People | 1,547 | 1,861 | 2,002 | 1,483 | 1,253 | -230 | -16% |

**does not include institutions count*

Although the sheltered count has varied over time (including shifts due to HUD's definitional changes), it is the unsheltered count that has largely contributed to the overall decline in the total number of homeless people in San Mateo County. Specifically, in the 2017 count, the number was 637, 51% less than its highest of 1,299 in 2013.

GEOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN

2017 Distribution of Unsheltered Homeless People by City

The following chart summarizes the geographic distribution of the unsheltered homeless people who were counted in 2017 and the change from previous counts. There were several cities with fewer people counted and an almost equal number where the homeless population increased.

| CITY | 2009 COUNT | 2011 COUNT | 2013 COUNT | 2015 COUNT | 2017 COUNT | NET CHANGE (2015-2017) | % CHANGE (2015-2017) |
|---------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Airport | 4 | 9 | 5 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 200% |
| Atherton | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | -1 | -100% |
| Belmont | 5 | 1 | 43 | 11 | 3 | -8 | -73% |
| Brisbane | 1 | 0 | 34 | 21 | 19 | -2 | -10% |
| Burlingame | 8 | 3 | 13 | 7 | 21 | 14 | 200% |
| Colma | 0 | 1 | 7 | 3 | 1 | -2 | -67% |
| Daly City | 49 | 44 | 27 | 32 | 17 | -15 | -47% |
| East Palo Alto | 204 | 385 | 119 | 95 | 98 | 3 | 3% |
| Foster City | 0 | 0 | 7 | 0 | 6 | 6 | NA |
| Half Moon Bay | 19 | 41 | 114 | 84 | 43 | -41 | -49% |
| Hillsborough | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0% |
| Menlo Park | 25 | 72 | 16 | 27 | 47 | 20 | 74% |
| Millbrae | 1 | 1 | 21 | 8 | 7 | -1 | -13% |
| Pacifica | 16 | 95 | 150 | 63 | 112 | 49 | 78% |
| Portola Valley | 3 | 16 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | NA |
| Redwood City | 220 | 233 | 307 | 223 | 94 | -129 | -58% |
| San Bruno | 34 | 14 | 99 | 8 | 26 | 18 | 225% |
| San Carlos | 11 | 9 | 10 | 20 | 28 | 8 | 40% |
| San Mateo | 99 | 68 | 103 | 82 | 48 | -34 | -41% |
| South San Francisco | 7 | 122 | 172 | 55 | 33 | -22 | -40% |
| Unincorporated | 95 | 47 | 46 | 32 | 30 | -2 | -6% |
| Coastside | | | | 22 | 22 | 0 | |
| Central | | | | 0 | 0 | 0 | |
| North | | | | 0 | 3 | 3 | |
| South | | | | 10 | 5 | -5 | |
| Woodside | 2 | 0 | 7 | 2 | 0 | -2 | -100% |
| Total | 803 | 1,162 | 1,299 | 775 | 637 | -138 | -18% |

CONCLUSION

The number of homeless persons decreased from the 2015 count to the 2017 count, including a significant decrease in the number of unsheltered people. The County and its partner agencies will continue to implement strategies identified in the strategic plan to address homelessness, using data from the count and many other data sources to help guide implementation. The County's Strategic Plan to End Homelessness can be found through the link at the bottom of the page here: <http://hsa.smcgov.org/center-homelessness>.