



**2018** District of Thunder Bay Point-In-Time Count  
of People Experiencing Homelessness

November 2018

# Acknowledgements

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- Lakehead Social Planning Council
- Thunder Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre
- The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board
- Thunder Bay Drug Strategy
- Thunder Bay Public Library
- Ontario Native Women's Association
- People Advocating for Change through Empowerment Inc.
- Shelter House Thunder Bay
- Salvation Army
- Grace Place
- John Howard Society of Thunder Bay and District
- Kinna-aweya Legal Clinic
- Habitat for Humanity
- Blucher, Picton, Windsor Community Action Group
- The Gathering Place
- Urban Abbey
- Dilico Anishinabek Family Care
- 211 Ontario North
- Elizabeth Fry Society of Northwestern Ontario

We would also like to thank all the volunteers for their invaluable time and input in this project. Most of all, we would like to thank all the participants who took the time to complete a survey and share their stories to help us better understand their experiences of homelessness in the District of Thunder Bay. Thank you.

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# Contents

Point-in-Time Count Summary	4
Background	6
Understanding the Local Context	8
Methodology	12
Results	18
Recommendations	28
Conclusion	30
References	31
Appendix 1 - Survey Sites	34
Appendix 2 - Survey	35
Appendix 3 - Emergency Resource Sheet	41

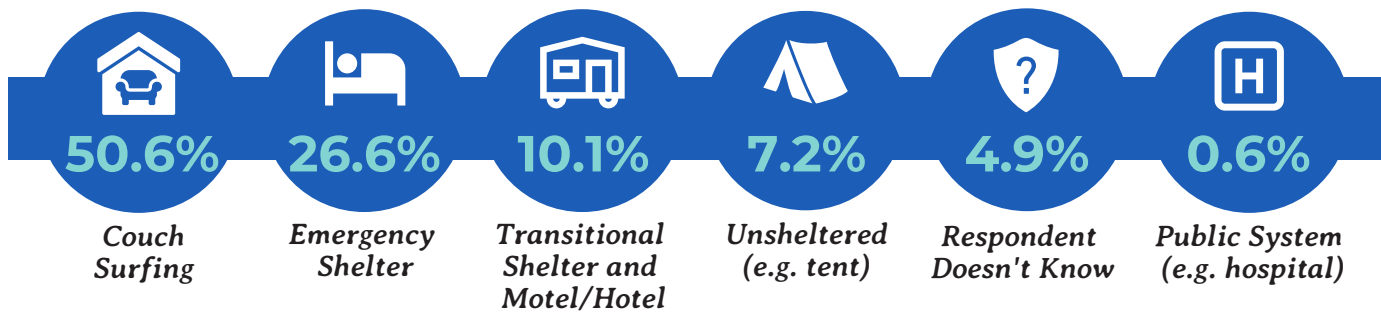
# Point-in-Time Count Summary

## THUNDER BAY POINT-IN-TIME COUNT 2018

July 2018

**474** people experiencing homelessness were surveyed during a 24 hour period on April 21st & 22nd

### Where are they staying?



### Who are they?

63.5% are male and 35.2% are female (0.9% did not respond\*)



6.5% identify as LGBTQ (2.3% did not respond\*)

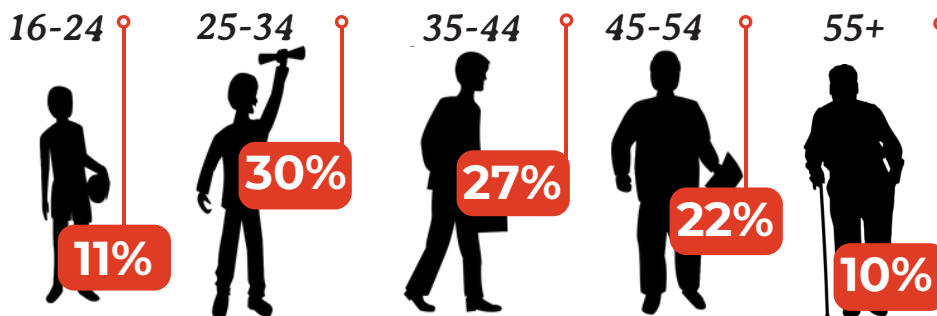


7.0% are veterans (0.8% did not respond\*)



\*Non-responses include don't know, decline to answer and unclear/blank responses

### How old are they?



**66%**  
identify as  
Indigenous

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**61%**  
of respondents first  
experienced  
homelessness before  
turning 25

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**37%**  
spent time in  
foster care and/or  
a group home

## Why are they homeless?



The most common factors identified as contributing to recent housing loss include:

- **Addiction or substance use**
- **Conflict with spouse/partner**
- **Unable to pay rent or mortgage**

## How long and how many times are they experiencing homelessness?

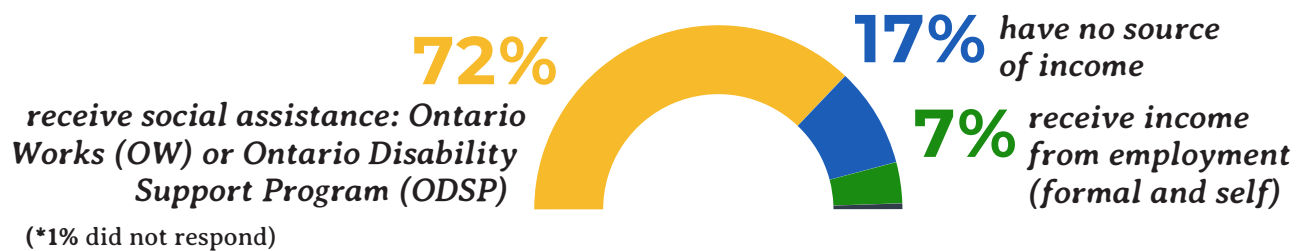


**59%**  
of respondents were chronically homeless - homeless for 6 months or more in the past year



**21%**  
of respondents were episodically homeless - homeless 3 or more times in the past year

## What are their sources of income?\*



## Where are they from?

26% of respondents have always lived in Thunder Bay



Of the people who have moved here, 62% are from other communities in Ontario and 19% are from outside Ontario. 19% have lived in Thunder Bay for less than 1 year.

# Background

Housing is a basic human necessity and right, yet for many people, adequate and affordable housing is out of their reach. Having a home has significant meaning – belonging, comfort, security, and stability - and is the foundation for a decent standard of living. The loss of this foundation is caused by a complex interaction between structural factors (economic and societal issues), system failures (inadequate policy and services), and individual circumstances (e.g. mental health and addiction challenges). As a result, homelessness can lead to poor health, barriers to education and employment, and social isolation.<sup>1</sup>

The Canadian Observatory on Homelessness (COH) defines homelessness as “the situation of an individual, family or community without stable, safe, permanent, appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect, means and ability of acquiring it”.<sup>2</sup> This definition categorizes homelessness in a typology that includes:

1. **Unsheltered, or absolute homelessness:** living on the streets or in places not intended for human habitation;
2. **Emergency sheltered:** staying in overnight shelters for people who are homeless, as well as shelters for those impacted by family violence;
3. **Provisionally accommodated:** accommodation is temporary and lacks security of tenure; and,
4. **At risk of homelessness:** people who are not homeless, but whose current economic and/or housing situation is precarious or does not meet public health and safety standards.<sup>3</sup>

The overrepresentation of Indigenous people in the homeless population is well documented,<sup>4</sup> therefore it is important to consider the colonization and cultural genocide of Indigenous people that has allowed for this disparity. Moving forward, this knowledge and understanding needs to be at the forefront of efforts to end homelessness. As such, the definition of Indigenous homelessness is:

A human condition that describes First Nations, Metis and Inuit individuals, families or communities lacking stable, permanent, appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect, means or ability to acquire such housing. Unlike the common colonialist definition of homelessness, Indigenous homelessness is not defined as lacking a structure of habitation; rather, it is more fully described and understood through a composite lens of Indigenous worldviews. These include: individuals, families and communities isolated from their relationships to land, water, place, family, kin, each other, animals, cultures, languages and identities. Importantly, Indigenous people experiencing these kinds of homelessness cannot culturally, spiritually, emotionally or physically reconnect with their Indigeneity or lost relationships.<sup>5</sup>

With the rising rates of homelessness, communities, governments, and organizations have formed partnerships in an effort to end it. One such partnership is that between the District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board, Lakehead Social Planning Council, Thunder Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre and The Thunder Bay Drug Strategy. With the help of the Province of Ontario's Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI), the Government of Canada's Homeless Partnering Strategy (HPS), and 20,000 Homes Campaign, the partnership has undertaken a Point in Time (PiT) Count and Registry Week for 2018 in the District of Thunder Bay. These campaigns use surveys as tools to estimate the number of people experiencing homelessness in a community at a specific point in time. A Point in Time count gathers information about people experiencing homelessness, while Registry Week is a week-long event to identify people experiencing homelessness and develop a plan to house them. Registry Week surveys gather person-specific data through the Vulnerability Index – Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT), helping to triage those who are willing to receive supports and housing interventions.<sup>6</sup> The City of Thunder Bay's first PiT Count and Registry Week was conducted in 2016 with a partnership between Lakehead Social Planning Council, Thunder Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre and The Thunder Bay Drug Strategy. During that week, a total of 289 individuals were surveyed when self-reporting experiencing homelessness.<sup>7</sup>

Beginning on April 21, 2018, 474 people experiencing homelessness were surveyed, with 265 people choosing to participate in the longer VI-SPDAT, providing information to allow for follow up to help find housing. While the number of surveys collected in 2018 show a large increase from the 289 surveyed in the 2016 PiT count, it should not be interpreted as an indication of an increased homeless population in the city of Thunder Bay; outreach for 2018 PiT survey participants included extra advertising and different methods to reach more people experiencing hidden homelessness, drawing on lessons learned from the previous PiT count. It is also important to note that the PiT count in 2016 was conducted on January 16, when temperatures in the city of Thunder Bay ranged between -17.1°C and -11.7°C.<sup>8</sup> In contrast, on April 21, 2018, temperatures ranged between -0.7°C and 7.9°C;<sup>9</sup> much more favorable conditions for participation in outdoor survey events. Those who reported experiencing homelessness in the 2018 PiT count account for 0.44% of the total population of the city of Thunder Bay (107,909 people as of the 2016 census).<sup>10</sup>

As a new addition to this year's PiT Count and Registry Week, the Government of Ontario introduced a provincial requirement for Service Managers to conduct an enumeration of people experiencing homelessness as part of its goal to end chronic homelessness by 2025.<sup>11</sup> In response to this, surveys were also conducted in communities outside of the city of Thunder Bay; Oliver Paipoonge, Marathon, Terrace Bay, and Geraldton were chosen for this. However, as only 19 people were counted in these communities combined throughout the entire week, the sample is too small to guarantee anonymity of the participants; therefore, this data has been suppressed.

The data collected from the PiT Count and Registry Week will be used to understand the characteristics of individuals that make up the homeless population, improve services and programs for those individuals, and increase public awareness of homelessness.<sup>12</sup> The information will also be used to evaluate progress toward ending homelessness, study demographic changes, prioritizing service needs, and to continue the dialogue about homelessness with organizations, government, and community members.<sup>13</sup>

# Understanding the Local Context

The information obtained from the PiT Count and Registry Week will provide details about individual factors that influenced homelessness. However, it is important to have a holistic view and recognize the societal issues that have allowed homelessness to become what the United Nations International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights referred to as a “national crisis.”<sup>14</sup> These societal factors include an unaffordable rental market, low income, and insufficient government assistance.

## Rental Housing Market and High Shelter Costs

The average rental market vacancy rate for the city of Thunder Bay decreased to 3.2% in 2017 (Table 1), due to the gap narrowing between demand and supply of rental housing, especially with an influx of international students and seniors relocating to urban areas to access health services. Declining vacancies contributed to a 3.8% increase in the average rent in 2017, to a cost of \$886 per month (average rental cost for all sizes of accommodations in the city of Thunder Bay). This increase exceeded the rate of inflation and was more than double the Ontario Rent Review Guideline of 1.5%.<sup>15</sup>

Table 1 – Vacancy Rates in the City of Thunder Bay, 2016-2017

	Bachelor		1 Bedroom		2 Bedroom		3 Bedroom +		Total	
	2016	2017	2016	2017	2016	2017	2016	2017	2016	2017
Vacancy Rate	10.20%	5.90%	3.60%	4.30%	5.30%	2.40%	5.70%	0.00%	5.00%	3.20%

Source: Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation

Housing is considered affordable when it is less than 30% of total household income. When people spend more than 30% of their income on housing, they experience financial strain, with insufficient funds for other expenses such as food, transportation, education, or other needs. In the city of Thunder Bay, 19.3% of the population spent more than 30% or more of their income on shelter costs in 2016.<sup>16</sup> This percentage is higher for tenant households; 42.6% of renters find themselves living in unaffordable housing.<sup>17</sup>



## Low Income and Social Assistance

The Low-Income Measure, After Tax (LIM-AT), 50% of the median income adjusted after tax, is a relative measure of poverty calculated by Statistics Canada that can be adjusted to fit any household size.<sup>18</sup> In 2016, the LIM-AT for an individual was calculated at \$22,133 by Statistics Canada.<sup>19</sup> 13.8% of the population of the city of Thunder Bay earned less than the LIM-AT threshold in 2016.<sup>20</sup>

### Ontario's social assistance program, Ontario Works (OW)

An individual receiving OW and not living in social housing or receiving a rent supplement will be unable to afford the average rent of a one-bedroom apartment. A single parent with one child earning OW would have to spend 87% of their income on rent, with only \$141 remaining for the rest of the month. This amount would have to cover all other expenses – food, transportation, clothing, child care, phone and household expenses. Although the rates for Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) are slightly higher, housing is still not affordable as these households spend more than 50% on market rent rates. While there was a 1.5% increase to OW and ODSP rates as of October 1st, 2018, this sub-inflationary increase does not keep pace with the cost of living. Some policy experts have suggested that the province set a Minimum Income Standard – based initially on the LIM-AT – in order to achieve income adequacy.<sup>21</sup>

Table 2 – Average Market Rents and Social Assistance Rates

	1 Bedroom		2 Bedroom		3 Bedroom	
Average Rent	\$778		\$959		\$1,194	
Maximum Shelter and Basic Needs Benefits	Single	Average Rent as % of Income	Single Parent +1 child 0-17 years	Average Rent as % of Income	Couple +2 children 0-17 years	Average Rent as % of Income
OW	\$733	106%	\$1,002	96%	\$1,250	96%
ODSP	\$1,169	67%	\$1,596	60%	\$1,887	63%

Source: Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation; Ontario Works and ODSP Rate Sheets

## Social and Affordable Housing

Social and Affordable Housing options are important aspects for individuals moving from homelessness to being successfully housed. However, there is currently an imbalance in Social and Affordable Housing stock relative to the demands of those requiring housing assistance. Currently there are 1,069 individuals on the Social Housing Waitlist and of this total 53% are single individuals and 78% require a one bedroom unit. Of the approximately 4,030 Social Housing units in the District of Thunder Bay, one bedroom units make up a disproportionately small amount of the overall stock. Despite this, the average wait time from application to an offer of a unit is only 9.5 months for the District of Thunder Bay. This is amongst the lowest wait times in Ontario. Further, the High Needs Homeless initiative that prioritizes housing for qualified individuals has successfully housed 73 individuals since its creation in 2016. However, there are still a number of individuals that are homeless and more needs to be done. New Social Housing initiatives such as the Portable Housing Benefit and continued investment in new one bedroom Social and Affordable Housing stock through programs such as the Investment in Affordable Housing Initiative (IAH) are key to addressing the current imbalance and ensuring that housing availability is not an obstacle to addressing homelessness.



## Mental Health and Addiction

The links between homelessness and mental health and addiction issues are well-established in the research literature.<sup>22</sup> Though the incidence of mental health or addiction issues are significant risk factors, they do not automatically result in homelessness. Similarly, homelessness and associated complications can also exacerbate existing mental health issues or contribute to substance use as a coping mechanism.

Data compiled across a wide-range of categories shows higher rates of problematic substance abuse in the District of Thunder Bay when compared to provincial averages.<sup>23</sup> Perhaps most alarming are the high rates of opioid-related morbidity and mortality, as demonstrated in Table 3.

Table 3 – 2016 Comparative opioid-related morbidity and mortality in Ontario and the District of Thunder Bay, rate per 100,000 people

	Ontario	District of Thunder Bay
Emergency Department Visits for Opioid Poisonings	31.7	53
Hospitalization Rates for Opioid Poisonings	13.7	20
Deaths from Opioid Poisonings	6.2	9.1

Source: Public Health Ontario, Interactive Opioid Tool

Moreover, the mental illness hospitalization rate per 100,000 both in the city of Thunder Bay (972) and the broader North West LHIN service area (933) is more than double the provincial rate (392).<sup>24</sup>

Additional resources are required for the continuum of mental health and substance use treatment, including targeted services for existing social housing tenants, in order to prevent and reduce homelessness.

# Methodology

The District of Thunder Bay PiT Count was a snapshot of people experiencing homelessness on April 21st, 2018. Registry Week was held from April 23rd to April 27th. The week-long method collected personal information using the VI-SPDAT. With this information, it aims to learn every person experiencing homelessness by name and starting a By-Name List, a “real-time list of all people experiencing homelessness” in the community.<sup>25</sup> It helps to provide a better understanding of the movement into and out of homelessness and is a necessary tool to measure progress to ending homelessness. Table 4 provides an overview of the two events.

Table 4 – Overview of the 2018 PiT Count and Registry Week

	Point-in-Time Count	Registry Week
Purpose	To count the number of individuals experiencing homelessness at a specific point in time as a benchmark for progress.	To know every individual experiencing homelessness by name and assign an acuity score to help house them.
Date	21-Apr-18	April 23-27, 2018
Number of Individuals Surveyed	474	254
Number of Survey Sites	9	14
Survey Used	HPS Core Questions, Optional COH Questions, and Local Questions + VI-SPDAT	VI-SPDAT

## Data Collection

During the 24-hour period of April 21st, approximately 100 trained volunteers administered surveys at 9 survey locations throughout the city of Thunder Bay beginning at 6pm. There was also a mobile team of volunteers from the Thunder Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre that targeted high priority locations to survey people experiencing homelessness found outdoors. During the week of April 23rd to April 27th, trained volunteers administered the VI-SPDAT survey at 14 locations, including emergency shelters, social services organizations and public libraries. Volunteers were also set up at locations in Oliver Paipooonge, Marathon, Terrace Bay, and Geraldton (see Appendix 1 for all locations).

Volunteers were trained to treat everyone with respect, informing those surveyed that they could refuse to answer questions or stop the survey at any time. Participants’ safety and comfort were a priority. Consideration was taken to minimize any risks of harm from the survey questions – the survey was voluntary, and an emergency resource information sheet was available (see Appendix 3). Following cultural practices, food was offered to survey participants during the 24 hour PiT Count at the Thunder Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre and at other magnet events held in the city. At the end of the survey, all individuals were given a \$20 honorarium for their participation.

## Surveys

Before conducting the survey, several screening questions were asked to determine whether participants were eligible to continue. These questions were:

1. Have you already completed this survey with another volunteer?
2. Are you willing to participate in the survey?
3. Where are you staying tonight?
4. Do you have your own house or apartment you can safely return to?

These questions were used to control duplication and to ensure that participation was completely voluntary. Participants were also told that there were two different surveys (one anonymous and one that requires personal information) and that they were free to choose to do one or both.

The PiT Count focuses on enumeration of those who are experiencing absolute homelessness on the day of the count: people experiencing unsheltered and emergency sheltered homelessness. The hidden homeless population was included in the District of Thunder Bay's PiT Count due to the high proportion of people couch surfing in the 2016 PiT Count. Table 5 shows the different types of homelessness that this year's PiT Count was able to capture through two data collection methods (enumeration and surveys).

Table 5 – Types of Homelessness Captured by the PiT Count

Typology	Living Situation	Enumeration	Survey
Unsheltered	People living in public or private spaces without consent or contract	NO	YES
	People living in places not intended for permanent human habitation	NO	YES
Emergency sheltered	Emergency overnight shelters for people who are homeless	NO	YES
	Shelters for individuals/families impacted by family violence	YES	YES
Provisionally accommodated	Interim housing for people who are homeless	NO	YES
	People living temporarily with others, but without guarantee of continued residency or immediate prospects for accessing permanent housing	NO	YES
	People accessing short term, temporary rental accommodations without security of tenure	NO	YES
	People in institutional care who lack permanent housing arrangements	YES	YES

Source: Canadian Observatory on Homelessness

The District of Thunder Bay PiT Count survey consisted of 21 questions: 14 HPS mandated core questions, 4 optional COH questions, and 3 local questions developed by the Thunder Bay Drug Strategy and Elizabeth Fry Society of Northwestern Ontario (see Appendix 2 for the full survey). The information collected provides a better understanding of the demographics of the homeless population in The District of Thunder Bay at that point in time, as well as local information associated with homelessness, including the child welfare system, substance use and incarceration.

Completion of the VI-SPDAT survey tool required participants to sign a consent form to address privacy and confidentiality concerns regarding identifiable information. The consent form presented the following information:

- How the information will be used
- Who will have access to the information
- Who to contact if participants want to withdraw consent

## Enumeration

In addition to the survey, several locations were asked to complete enumeration forms detailing the number of people who stayed overnight on April 21st with no permanent address to return to. The following locations responded: Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre (Adult Mental Health), Balmoral Centre (withdrawal management service), Faye Peterson Transition House (women's shelter), and St. Joseph's Care Group (rehabilitation hospital/palliative care). The result from the enumeration forms was included in the total enumeration to reflect a more accurate number of people experiencing homelessness in The city of Thunder Bay, but as these counts do not include demographic information, the report will focus on the surveyed individuals.

## Volunteers

The joint PiT Count and Registry Week would not have been possible without volunteers who contributed their time to the event. Approximately 100 people registered to volunteer, coming from a variety of backgrounds. All volunteers were required to attend a training session before the enumeration event. Training topics included safety, background information about the PiT Count and Registry Week, cultural awareness, roles and responsibilities of volunteers, and the survey tools. At the end of training, all volunteers signed an Oath of Confidentiality in order to ensure that personal information of participants would not be shared. Other volunteer roles included helping to prepare meals and serve them, greeting participants, and team captains.

## Data Entry and Analysis

Survey data from the PiT Count and Registry Week were entered into the Government of Canada's Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS) and submitted to HPS. Before being entered, surveys were examined for duplicates, void surveys (e.g. incomplete surveys), and signed consent forms. A data quality check was done to ensure that the survey responses were entered correctly into HIFIS.

The survey responses were exported to Excel for data analysis. The final results went through a data quality check to ensure that calculations were free of errors. For both PiT Count and Registry Week results, percentages were rounded, so the total may not add up to 100%.

The analysis scrutinized all of the survey participants as a whole and chose a few key subcategories to compare. The categories included some demographic categories and some based on where the respondent was planning to sleep that night:

- People who reported couch surfing;
- people who reported shelter use;
- people experiencing absolute homelessness (unsheltered/living on the street);
- people experiencing chronic homelessness (180+ days of homelessness in 12 months);
- youth (people under 25 years old);
- survivors of domestic violence;
- people who reported Indigenous identity; and
- women.

Most of these subcategories are not mutually exclusive; someone may fall into all five demographic categories and one based on their sleeping arrangements. The only categories that would be mutually exclusive from one another are those who reported couch surfing, shelter use or absolute homelessness as these categories are based on the answer to a single question.

This report will outline the main responses for the survey participants, as well as any significant deviations seen within the subcategories outlined above.

## Limitations

Although the PiT Count/Registry Week is a useful tool to count the number of people experiencing homelessness, it is not without limitations:

**Statistical Significance** - Due to the difficulties in reaching people experiencing homelessness, a number of methodological issues arise in obtaining a statistically significant sample. The survey results are not random, only represent a single point in time, and are not large enough to be considered statistically significant to extrapolate to a larger population. Any comments herein about the population of people experiencing homelessness are only applicable to the group we have surveyed at this specific point in time.

**Minimum Count** - The PiT Count is only a snapshot of homelessness, so it is impossible to enumerate everyone experiencing homelessness in a community. It does not give a complete picture of people at risk of housing loss, people who are couch surfing, and people who cycle in and out of homelessness. Thus, the PiT Count should be considered to be a minimum estimate of individuals experiencing homelessness.

**Self-Reporting** - Because the survey responses are self-reported, the results are dependent on the honesty of the participants. This issue is greater for sensitive topics such as sexual orientation and substance use, which participants may not be comfortable sharing with volunteers.

**Duplications** - The screening questions included whether participants already completed a survey, but with a \$20 honorarium and multiple survey locations, there is a reasonable likelihood of having duplicate surveys. The anonymous PiT survey did not allow for duplicate surveys to be identified.

**Inaccurate Survey Recording** - Survey responses were not recorded appropriately (for example, several surveys had multiple responses checked, were illegible, or were incorrectly entered). Data entry was difficult as many responses were unclear and limited our information. There were several VI-SPDAT surveys missing signed consent forms, so they had to be removed. Additionally, when responses were incorrectly recorded for the VI-SPDAT, it could have impacted the acuity score.



## Recommendations for Future Point-in-Time Counts and Registry Weeks

The second PiT Count and Registry Week in The District of Thunder Bay was a valuable learning experience. Several recommendations to improve future enumeration events are:

- Better organization of surveys – number the surveys before the event and code them according to the survey location for a more efficient data entry process.
- Consent forms – ensure that each survey has a consent form and that they are signed if the VI-SPDAT survey is completed.
- Add demographic questions to the Registry Week only surveys for better data collection
- Modify the honorarium – \$20 was given to participants whether they completed one survey or both, which created a low incentive to complete the second part of the survey, the VI-SPDAT. Assigning each part of the survey an honorarium (i.e. \$10 for the first part and \$10 for the second part of the survey) could have improved the number of VI-SPDATs being completed.
- Improved training for volunteers – additional training on administering the survey and recording the responses will improve data collection.
- Improved volunteer appreciation - hosting an event with food to thank all community volunteers soon after the PiT Count would have provided a sense of “job well done.” Sending volunteers a copy of the infographic by e-mail would also honour their involvement.
- Community participation – while many community members volunteered for the PiT Count and Registry Week, more community participation in the planning, organization, and evaluation of the event is encouraged. Inviting people with lived experience to the Point-in-Time Committee is highly recommended, as well as releasing the survey results at an event for survey participants.
- Underrepresented populations – the PiT Count and Registry Week did not count many youth or families. Future PiT Counts and Registry Weeks are encouraged to focus on attracting underrepresented populations.
- Survey locations strategically placed throughout the city may reduce duplicate surveys. Overlapping shifts for volunteers may help as well.
- Data entry and data sharing agreements articulated before funding application is submitted to Service Canada to clarify roles and responsibilities of partnering organizations.

# Results

At least 516 people were counted experiencing homelessness during the 2018 PiT Count. Table 6 shows the totals according to the method of counting and typology of homelessness. 474 people were surveyed and 42 people were identified through enumeration data provided by hospitals, a women's shelter, and a withdrawal management centre.

Table 6 – Total Count of People Experiencing Homelessness

	Survey	Enumeration	Total
Unsheltered and Unknown	57	-	57
Emergency sheltered	126	9	135
Provisionally accommodated	291	33	324
<b>Total</b>	<b>474</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>516</b>

## Demographics

Participants were asked if they identify as having Indigenous ancestry, as First Nations with or without status, or as Métis. 66.5% of respondents reported having an Indigenous identity; this is a much larger proportion than in the city of Thunder Bay where 12.5% of the population reports Indigenous identity.<sup>26</sup> Of those participants who were considered youth, 80% identified as Indigenous.

The average age of participants was 39. The average age for youth was 21, with the youngest participant 16. The average age for survivors of domestic violence was 35.

When asked when they had first experienced homelessness, 61.4% of all respondents reported it was before the age of 25. The average age of the first homeless episode was 24 years old.

When asked if they identified as veterans, 6.0% of participants served in the Canadian military and 1.1% served in the RCMP. Of those who identified as veterans, 75% identified as Indigenous and 90.9% identified as male.

The 2016 census states that 8.8% of the population in The city of Thunder Bay were immigrants.<sup>27</sup> The survey results showed that only 0.4% of individuals experiencing homelessness were immigrants. All of the respondents who identified as immigrants, also identified they had been in Canada for more than 15 years.

When asked about their sexual orientation, 6.5% of respondents identified as LGBTQ2S+. In the 2014 Canadian Community Health Survey, 1.7% of the population reported to be homosexual, and 1.3% reported to be bisexual.<sup>28</sup> Statistics on the LGBTQ2S+ population are often estimates and thought to be underreported, or focus specifically on youth for a number of reasons, "including the large percentage of 'out' youth compared to the adult population".<sup>29</sup>

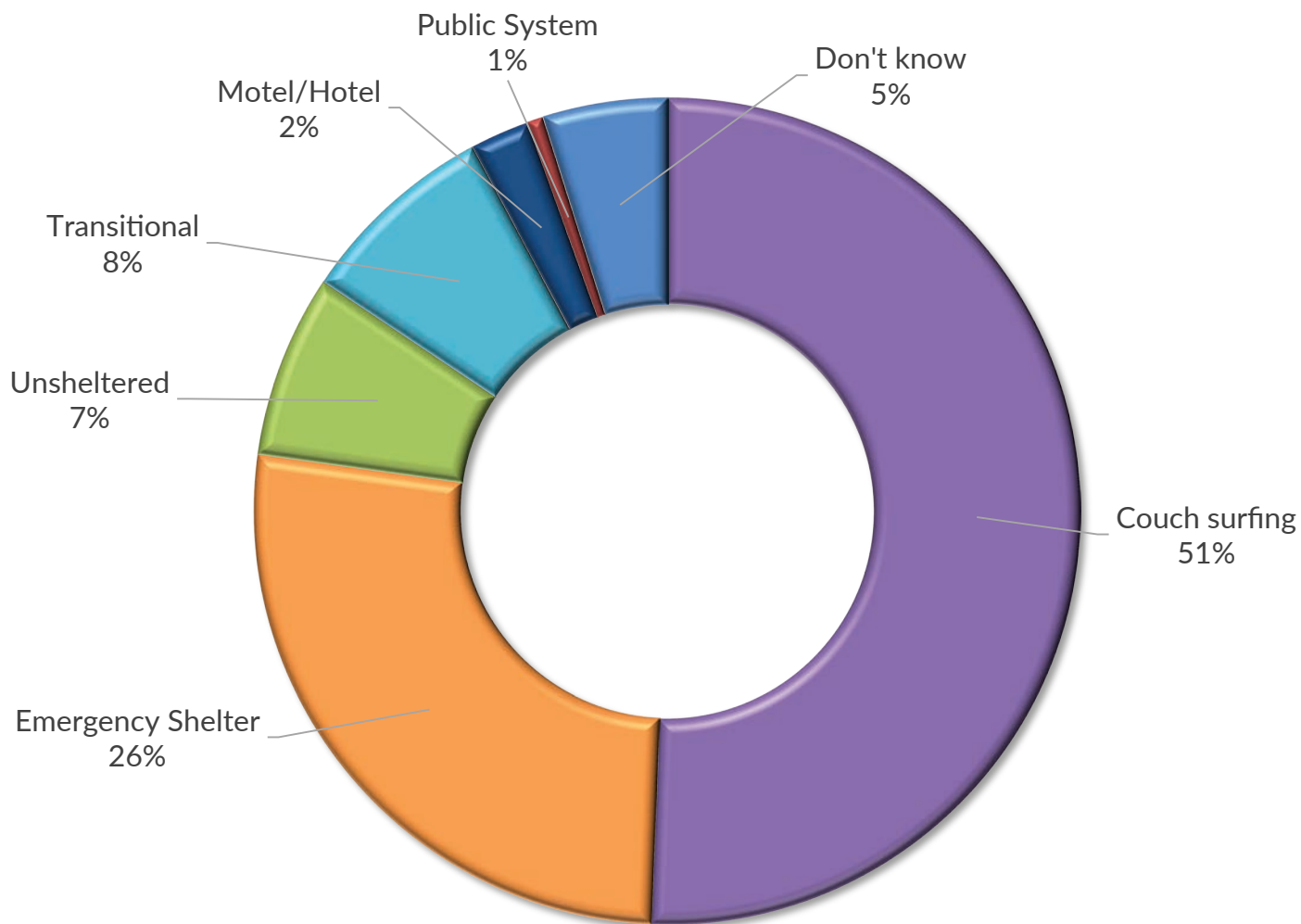
## Place to Stay at Night

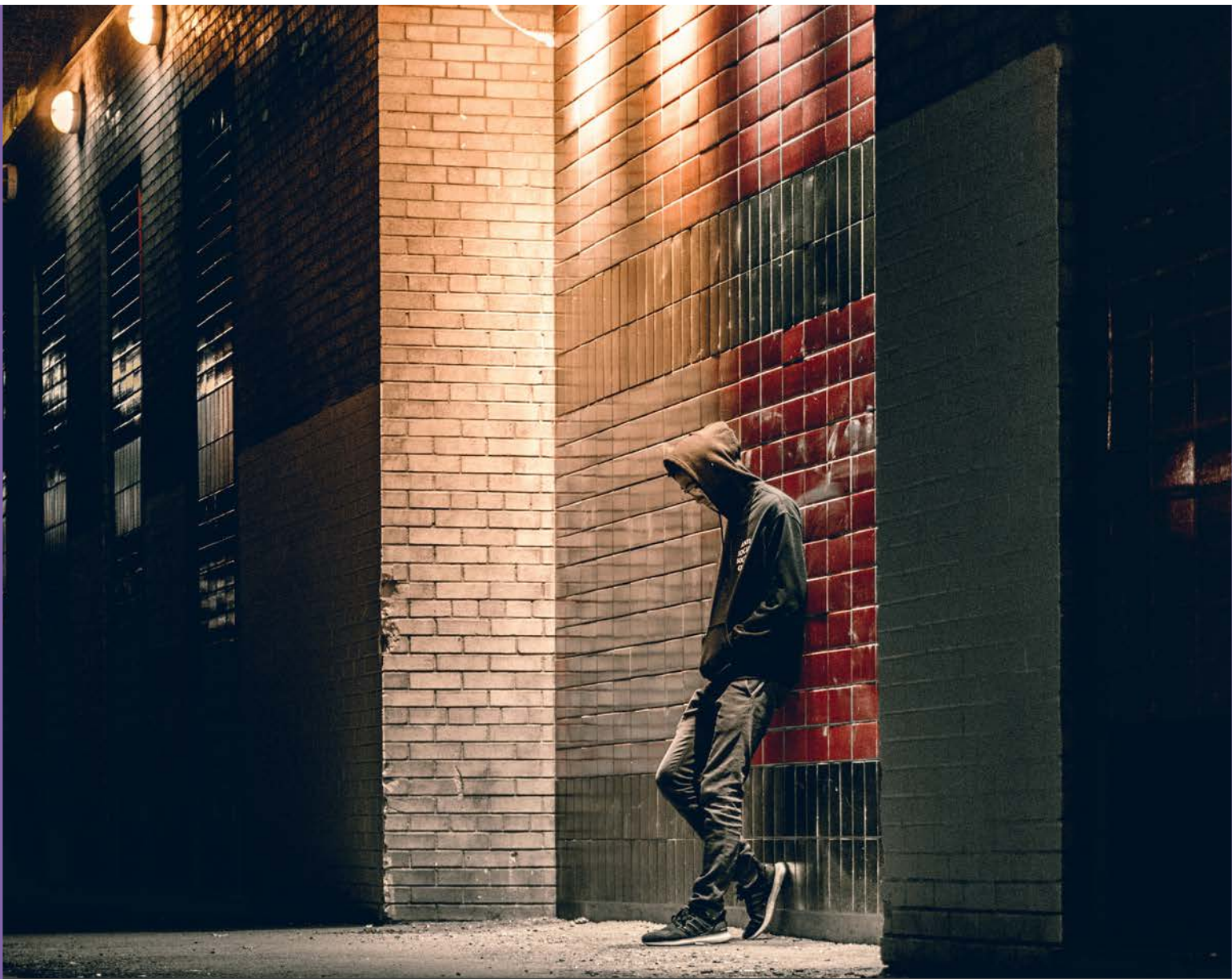
When asked where they were planning to stay that night, 50.63% of respondents planned to couch surf (stay at someone else's place), while 26.6% of survey participants were planning to stay in a shelter. 7% of people who stayed in a shelter on April 21 had not stayed in a shelter before. 76.2% of shelter users were male, while 60.5% of females planned to couch surf that night.

20% of youth either planned to stay somewhere unsheltered or didn't know where they would stay; 70% of youth had used an emergency shelter before.

60.9% of survivors of domestic violence planned to couch surf. 50.4% of couch surfers had never stayed in a shelter before.

**Locations Participants Planned to Sleep on April 21, 2018**





## Chronic and Episodic Homelessness

Chronic homelessness is defined as experiencing homelessness for 180 days or more in a 12-month time period. 58.9% of survey participants reported being homeless for more than 6 months and are classified as chronically homeless.

Episodic homelessness is defined as experiencing 3 or more homelessness events in a 12-month period. These periods of homelessness have a time gap between them. 21.3% of survey respondents are classified as episodically homeless. 13.6% of chronically homeless individuals were also classified as episodically homeless.

60.9% of participants classified as chronically homeless had been homeless for more than 1 year.

75.4% of those experiencing absolute homelessness are also chronically homeless and only 12.3% are episodically homeless.

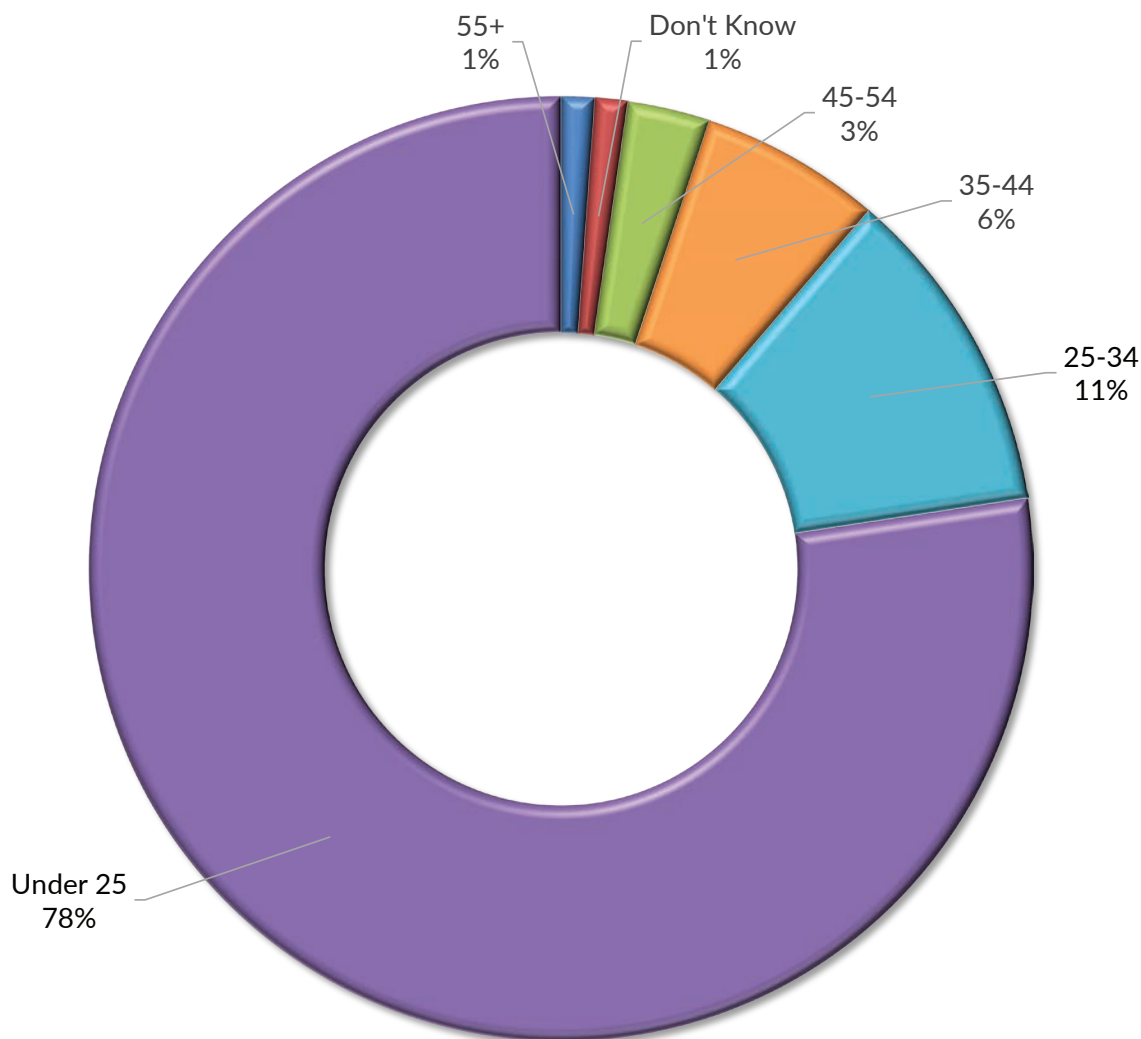
14% of youth are episodically homeless, but 62% are chronically homeless.

## Experience with Foster Care

Respondents were asked if they were ever in foster care; 37.6% of participants responded yes. That number jumped to 52% when looking only at youth under 25; a statistically significant difference from the total surveyed group. The Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies estimates that an average of 12,794 children are in foster care in Ontario,<sup>30</sup> which is around 0.5% of Ontario children under 18.<sup>31</sup> Indigenous survey participants also had a higher rate of experience in the foster care system than the rest of the respondents at 43.2%. When focusing on Indigenous youth, 55% had experience with foster care.

Of the 61.4% of participants who first experienced homelessness before the age of 25, 77.4% also had experience in the foster care system; this infers a correlation between history in foster care and the early experience of homelessness for this group of survey participants.

### Age at Time of First Homelessness Experience for Participants Who Also Had History in Foster Care



## Mental Health and Addiction

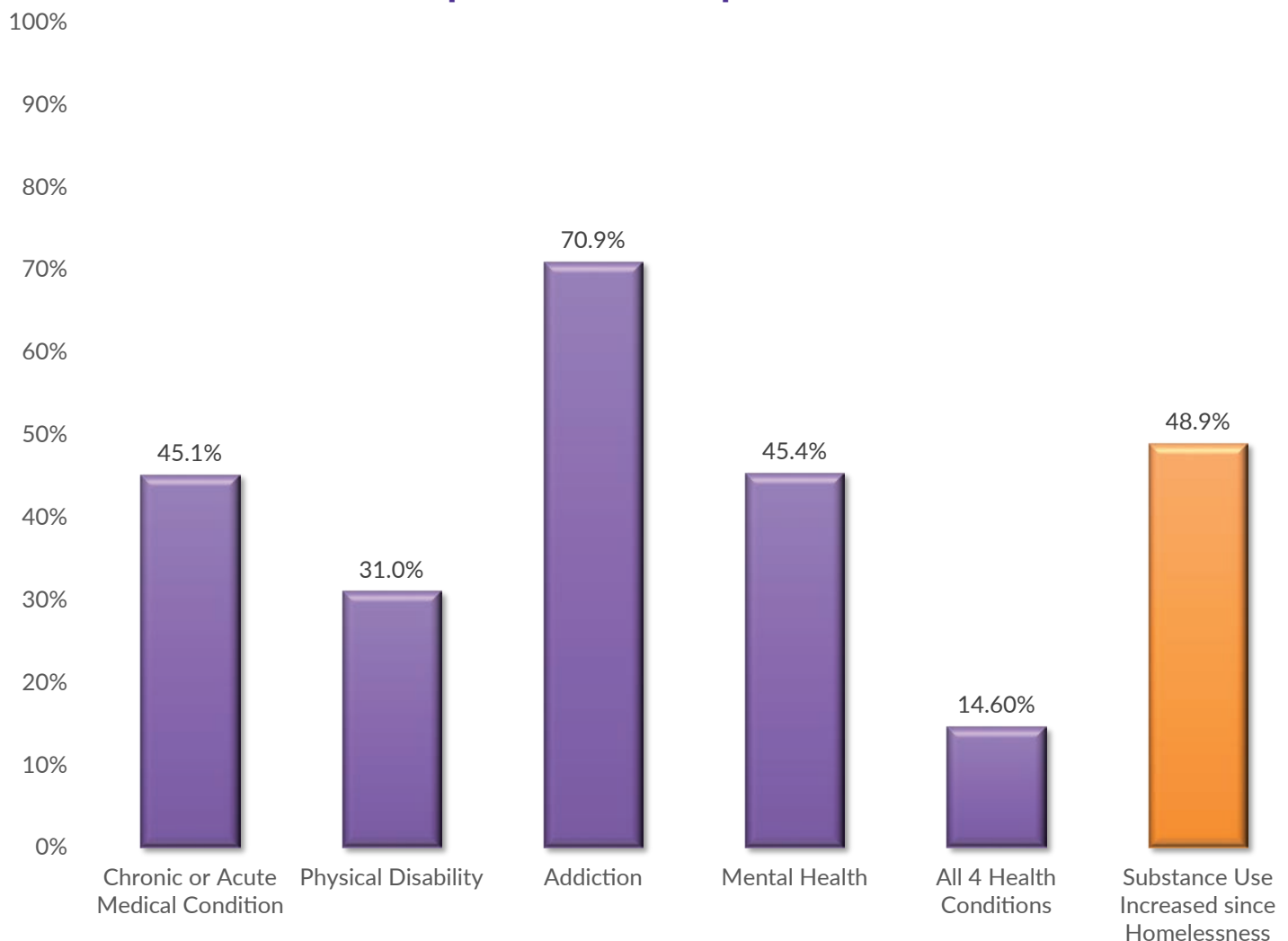
As addiction was the most reported reason for homelessness, the analysis included closer inspection of the questions surrounding health and addiction. 45.1% of all survey participants reported a chronic or acute medical condition, and 31% reported having a physical disability, and 45.4% reported having a mental health condition. 70.9% of participants reported having an addiction with 48.9% of participants reporting an increase in substance use since becoming homeless.

Of the respondents who reported having an addiction, 48.8% also reported having a chronic or acute medical condition, 31% report a physical disability, and 50.9% report having a mental health condition. 10.3% of all respondents report having all 4 conditions.

Looking at the subcategories, 79.6% of couch surfers reported having an addiction and 57.1% reported an increase in their substance use.

69.6% of survivors of domestic violence reported higher substance use since homelessness.

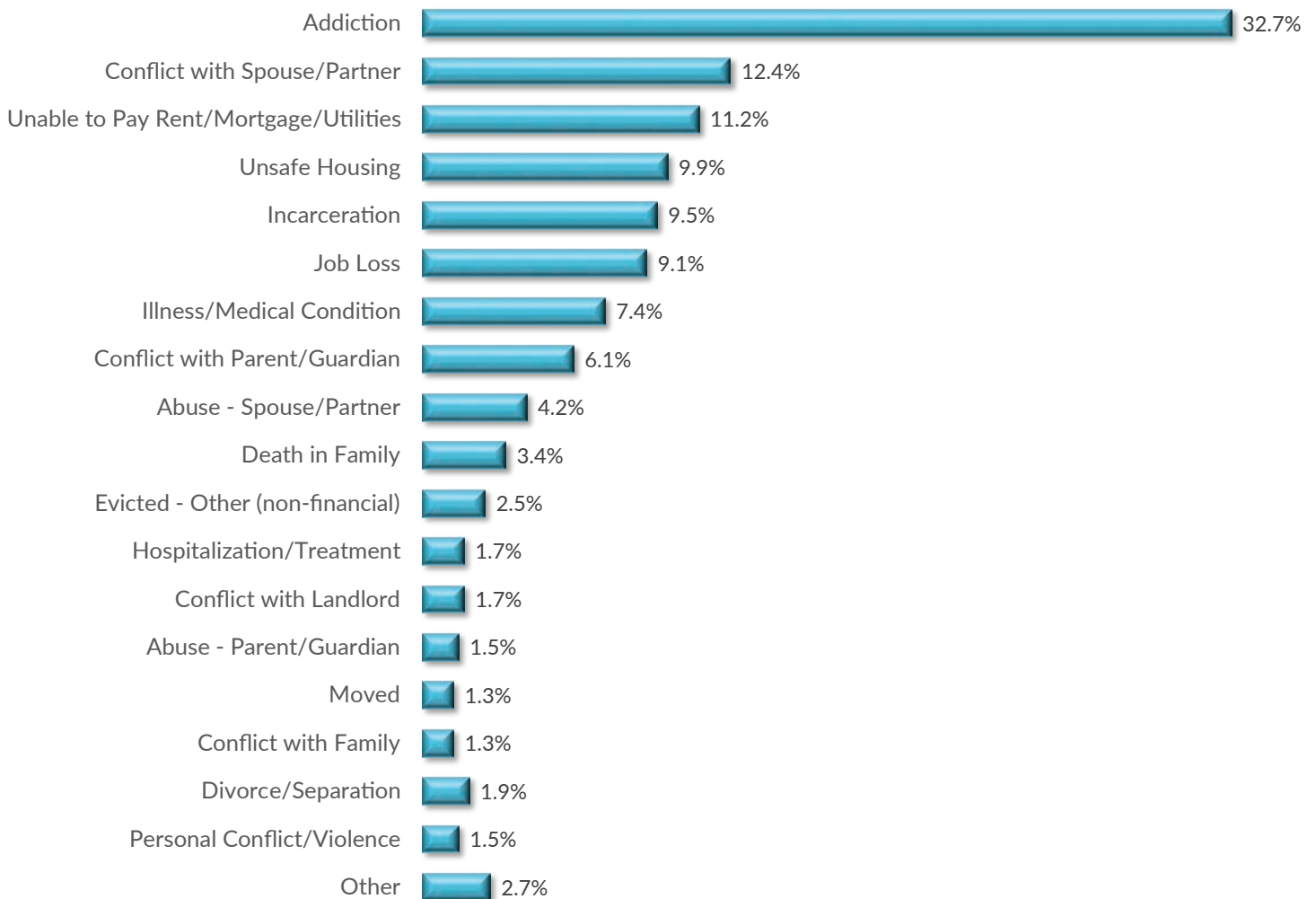
### Percent of Participants who Self-Reported Health Conditions



## Reasons for Homelessness

Participants were asked what they believe are the reasons for their homelessness. If the participant could not freely give reasons, the volunteer provided a list of examples and the participant chose as many of those options as they felt applicable. The top three self-reported reasons for homelessness were addiction (32.7%), conflict with their partner (12.5%), and inability to pay their rent or mortgage (11%). Across every subcategory except for survivors of domestic violence, the main self-reported reason for homelessness was addiction (32.7% of survey participants). For survivors of domestic violence, addiction is the second reason behind conflict with their partner.

### Self-Reported Reasons for Homelessness



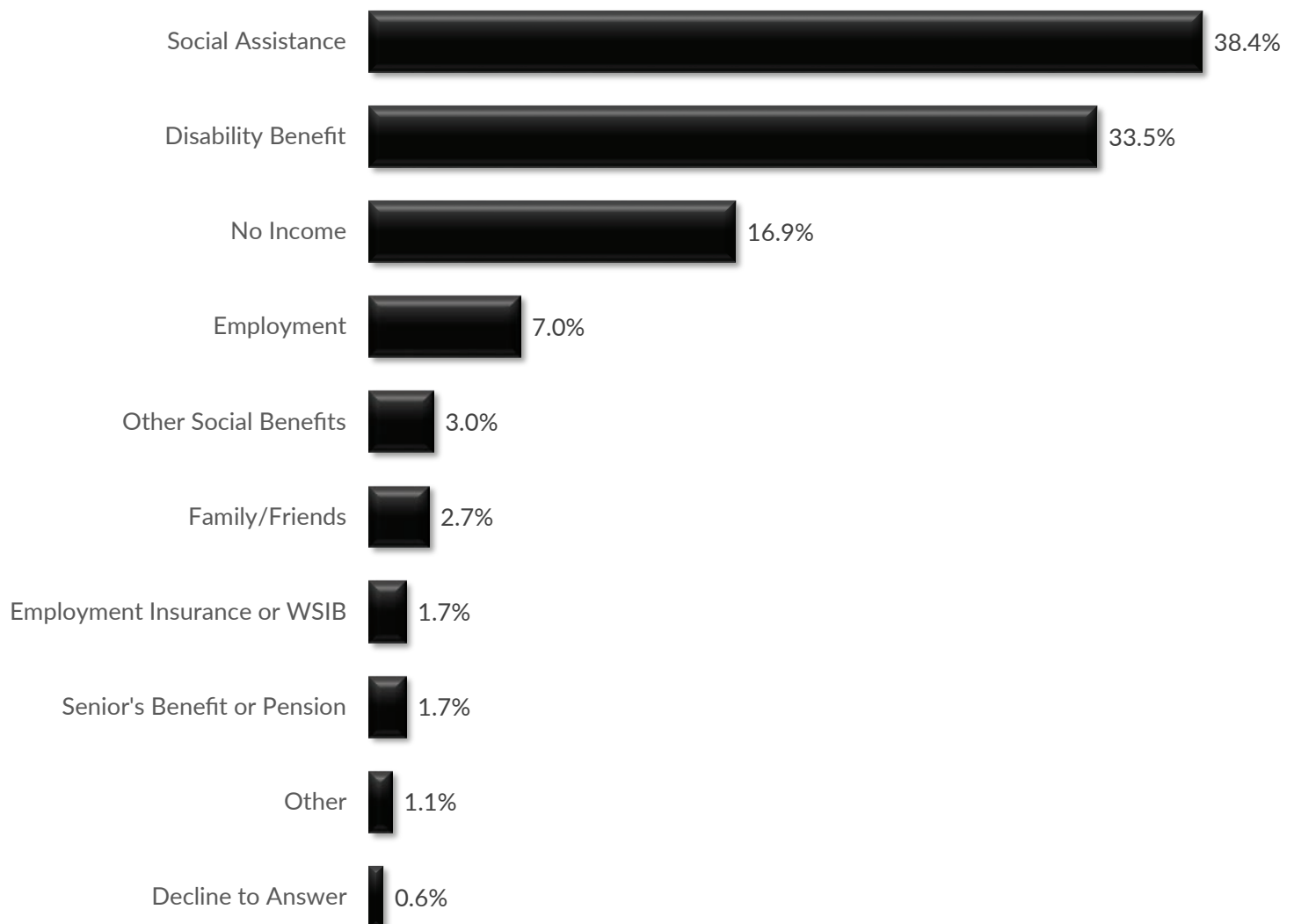
\*Total exceeds 100% because multiple responses were possible.

## Sources of Income

As of the 2016 census, the city of Thunder Bay had 15,495 people with earnings below the Low Income Measure – After Tax (LIM-AT), Participants were not asked whether they filed taxes, so it is unclear how many would have been counted in this number. The participants would account for 3.1% of those with earnings below the LIM-AT and 0.4% of the entire population of the city of Thunder Bay.

Social assistance/disability benefits were the main sources of income for 71.9% of people who participated in the survey. The third most reported source of income was “No income.” These were the three most reported sources of income across all subcategories studied. A single person receiving Ontario Works qualifies for up to \$384 per month for shelter costs, while the average rent for a bachelor apartment in the City of Thunder Bay is \$622 per month.<sup>32</sup>

### Reported income Sources



\*Total exceeds 100% because multiple responses were possible.





**71.9% of survey participants experiencing homelessness reported receiving social assistance as their main source of income.**

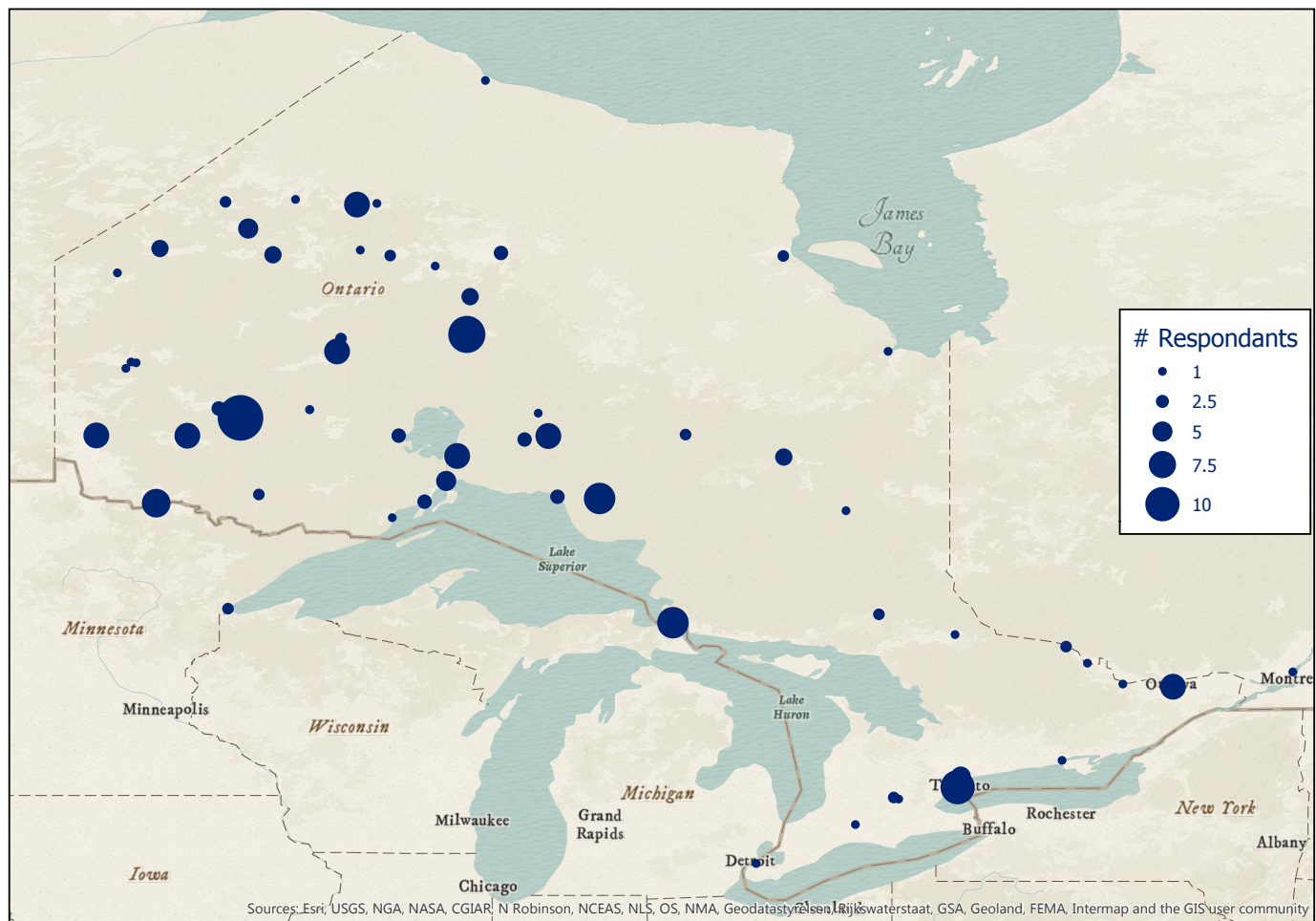
## Length of Time in Thunder Bay

Survey participants were asked if they have always been in this community; 25.7% of respondents were from the city of Thunder Bay, 55.5% had been here for more than a year, and 13.5% had been here for less than a year.

All subcategories reported around 69% not originally being from the city of Thunder Bay. Of those not originally from this community, 61.8% reported being from Ontario, and 30.6% reported that they came from a First Nations community.

The following map depicts the home communities of the survey participants who reported that they migrated within Ontario to the city of Thunder Bay:

Home Cities of PiT Count Participants who Migrated to Thunder Bay: Ontario

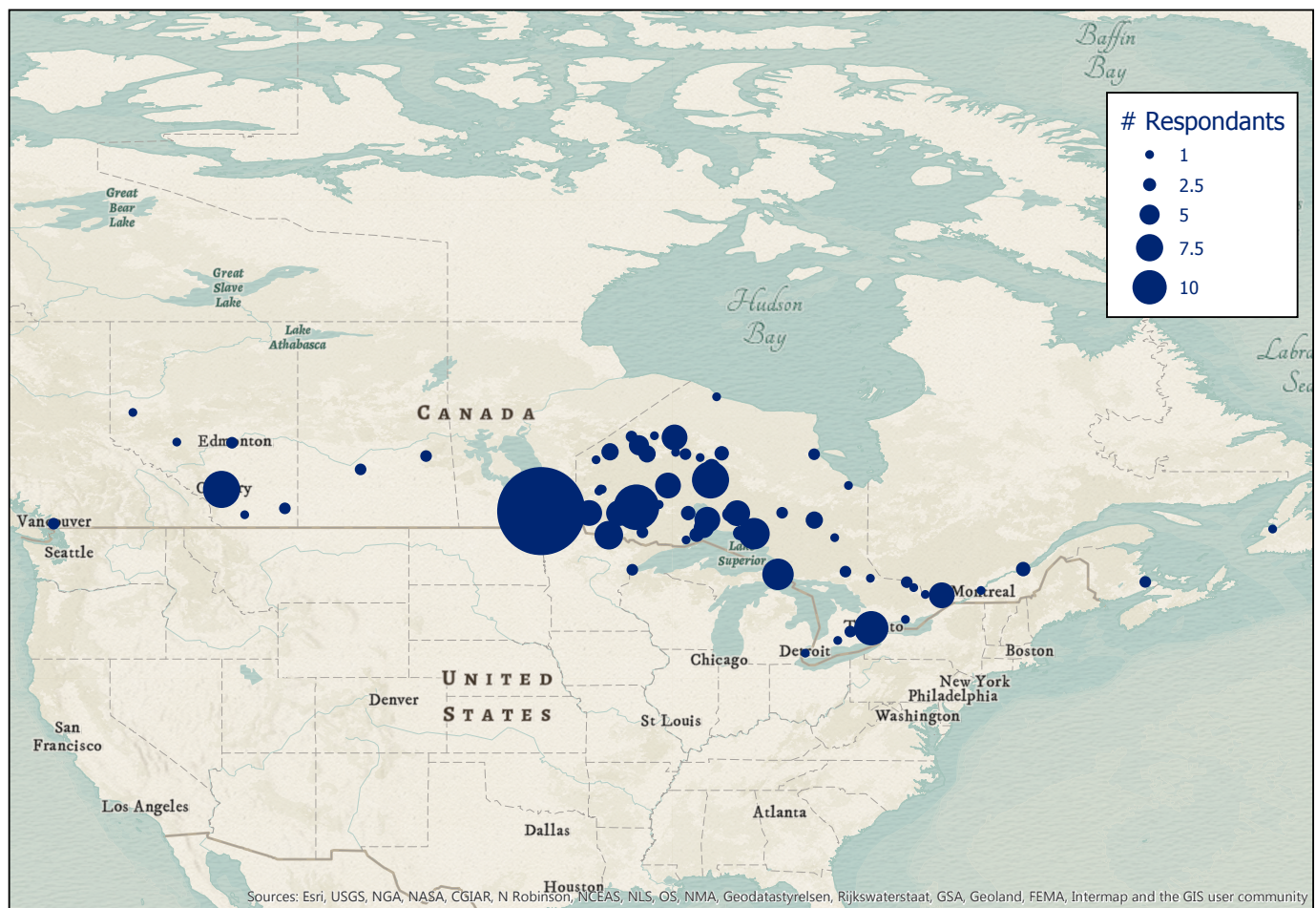


Data Source: Thunder Bay PiT Count - April 21-22, 2018

77.4% of survey participants who were not originally from the city of Thunder Bay reported being in this community for over a year.

The following map depicts the home communities of all of the survey participants who reported they migrated to Thunder Bay:

Home Cities of PiT Count Participants who Migrated to Thunder Bay: Canada



Data Source: Thunder Bay PiT Count - April 21-22, 2018

# Recommendations

## Advocacy: Address the Service Gaps in Child Welfare Systems and Individuals Aging out of Foster Care

Over one third of PiT count participants (37.6%) responded that they had been in foster care. That number was significantly higher with participants under the age of 25 (52%). Alarming, 77.4% of respondents who had first experienced homelessness before the age of 25 had experience in the foster care system. Given this correlation between homelessness and a history of foster care – a correlation well-supported by other research into homelessness – additional resources must be devoted to address service gaps in child welfare systems, particularly to those aging out of foster care.

For Indigenous participants, experience in the foster care system was higher both in overall responses (43.2%) and for those under 25 (55%), Culturally appropriate services that reconnect Indigenous people to cultural teaching and parenting skills help to prevent entry into the foster care system and prevent homelessness.

## Expansion of Culturally Competent Supports and Housing for Indigenous People

In the 2018 PiT Count, 66% of survey respondents in the city of Thunder Bay identified as Indigenous. To end Indigenous homelessness (as defined on p. 6 of this report), housing and housing supports need to be culturally competent and holistic, addressing the need for Indigenous people to reconnect with their Indigeneity and lost relationships to culture, place, family, community, identity.

In the Truth and Reconciliation “Calls to Action”, Indigenous peoples have the right to be actively involved in developing and determining housing programmes affecting them, and to administer such programmes through their own institutions as a part of the broader housing spectrum.

To this end, it is recommended that expansion of culturally competent supports and housing for Indigenous people be developed and administered by and in partnership with Indigenous organizations, while maintaining good relations and partnering with other housing service providers in Thunder Bay.

## Expansion of the High Needs Homeless and Home for Good Systems

Individuals experiencing chronic homelessness utilize a disproportionate amount of bed nights at emergency shelters and often require wrap-around supports to ensure successful tenancies when housed. Rapidly housing individuals experiencing chronic homelessness, with supports, is an essential step to relieving pressure on overburdened emergency shelter services. As such, there is a need to explore opportunities to expand the High Needs Homeless and Home for Good systems, as well as intensive case management supports provided by other community agencies, to assist a greater number of individuals and families experiencing homelessness.

Through the High Needs Homeless system at TBDSSAB, emergency shelter resident needs are assessed using the Service Prioritization and Decision Assistance Tool (SPDAT). Individuals are placed in the High Needs Homeless social housing waitlist prioritization category if their SPDAT score is in excess of a predetermined level. Through this, individuals who are placed in the High Needs Homeless category are housed much quicker than if they remained on the chronological waitlist. The Home For Good program provides intensive case management support for individuals that are placed in the High Needs Homeless waitlist category.

## Research on Migratory and Transient Homelessness

Data collected in the PiT Count demonstrates that a considerable number of individuals experiencing homelessness migrate to the city of Thunder Bay from remote northern communities as well as from the city of Winnipeg. Very little is known about the reasons for migratory and transient homelessness in the city of Thunder Bay beyond anecdotal accounts. As such, partnerships should be formed to research the correlation between migration of individuals from smaller communities in northern Ontario and the city of Winnipeg and the numbers of people experiencing homelessness, to inform solutions to homelessness in District of Thunder Bay. Possible areas of concentration may include substandard housing in remote communities; travel to the city of Thunder Bay to access services; and the impacts of insufficient transportation infrastructure linking urban and rural communities.

## Advocacy: Support for Addiction Treatment

The PiT Count revealed that addiction were the most self-reported cause for homelessness (32.7%) among participants. Overall, 70.9% of participants reported having an addiction. This correlation between addiction and homelessness is serious cause for concern. It is known, for example, that opioid-related morbidity and mortality rates occur at a rate much higher in the District of Thunder Bay than the provincial average. In order to address homelessness, additional resources must be devoted to addiction treatment, prevention, and direct supports.

## Coordinated Access System

In order to make the best use of existing resources, and to ensure that housing needs are being met across the social housing continuum, the development and operation of a Coordinated Access System to assist persons experiencing homelessness to access housing and supports should be explored. The Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness defines Coordinated Access System as a “community-wide system that streamlines the process for people experiencing homelessness to access housing and supports and is an essential step to smarter, faster, more coordinated housing system.” Furthermore, the utilization of Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS) for the Coordinated Access System should be considered for such an undertaking. There are currently a number of organizations that provide support to homeless and vulnerable individuals in the District of Thunder Bay. These organizations have overlapping mandates and receive funding from a variety of sources resulting in some individuals receiving support from multiple channels while others cannot access the system. The Coordinated Access system will address the current issues in coordinating the support services system. As part of this move to coordinate support services, the TBDSSAB should also work collectively with governments, both of Service Canada’s local funded Community Entities, the Thunder Bay Housing and Homelessness Coalition Advisory Board, the People with Lived Experience Advisory Committee, and community members at large. Collective impact and community engagement, along with an alignment of the financial resources provided for homelessness services including the Community Homelessness Partnering Strategy (CHPS), the Ontario commitment for increased resources dedicated to mental health and addiction support services, as well as the Federal Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) and its successor programs under the National Housing Strategy are imperative. This alignment of resources will result in a more coordinated, efficient homelessness prevention system.

# Conclusion

The District of Thunder Bay's second PiT Count and Registry Week in April 2018 was an opportunity for a diverse group of community members and organizations to work together to create a snapshot of homelessness. On the night of April 21st, 516 people were experiencing homelessness in the city of Thunder Bay, with 474 of these individuals completing a survey.

The data collected from the PiT Count will be used as a benchmark of progress to end homelessness, tailoring programs to serve the homeless population, changing policies regarding housing and social assistance, and garner support from the community to join in the efforts to reduce homelessness in the District of Thunder Bay.

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## Photo Credits

Cover - Woman Sitting - Photo by Christopher Sardegna on Unsplash

Page 10 - Tenants in the Garden - The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board

Page 20 - Man Leaning - Photo by Warren Wong on Unsplash

Page 25 - Woman's Hands - Photo by Cristian Newman on Unsplash

# Appendix 1

## Survey Sites for the Point-in-Time Count and Registry Week

Municipality	Location	Point-in-Time Count	Registry Week
City of Thunder Bay	Shelter House	Yes	No
	Thunder Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre	Yes	Yes
	John Howard Society	Yes	No
	Thunder Bay City Hall	Yes	Yes
	Salvation Army	Yes	Yes
	Salvation Army Food Truck	Yes	No
	Blucher, Picton, Windsor Community Action Group	Yes	Yes
	Dilico Anishinabek Family Care	Yes	Yes
	Urban Abbey	Yes	Yes
	Ontario Native Womens Association (ONWA)	No	Yes
	Grace Place	No	Yes
	Habitat for Humanity ReStore	No	Yes
	The Gathering Place	No	Yes
	Thunder Bay Public Libraries - Brodie, County Park, Mary J. L. Black, and Waverley	No	Yes
	Geraldton	Geraldton Arena	Yes
Pace Office - Geraldton		No	Yes
Marathon	Victim's Assistance Program Office - Marathon	Yes	No
	Pace Office - Marathon	No	Yes
Terrace Bay	Terrace Bay Municipal Offices	Yes	No
	Terrace Bay Public Library	No	Yes
Oliver Paipoonge	Kakabeka Community Centre	Yes	Yes

# Appendix 2

## Screening Tool and Survey

Hello. My name is \_\_\_\_\_.

### Screening question A

**Have you answered this survey with a person with this hat or nametag?**

- Yes...**END NOW**...let participant know that we are administering one survey per person
- No...continue to Script.

### Script

**I am a volunteer with the Thunder Bay Point in Time Count and Registry Week. We are conducting an anonymous survey with individuals to find out more about homelessness. We are also conducting a second survey that will give us information about your personal situation regarding housing and homelessness. We will use this information to help people access housing supports based on their need. You can choose to do one or both surveys. After we have finished you will receive \$20 cash for your time.**

### Screening question B

**Are you willing to participate in the survey?**

- Yes...continue to question C – beginning of survey
- No...**END NOW**...thank participant for their time

## SURVEY INTRODUCTION

(Surveyor complete - following Introductory Script, Screening and Consent)

Survey #

Interviewer's Name	Agency and/or Contact #	Team <input type="checkbox"/> Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer
Survey Date DD/MM/YYYY ___/___/___	Survey Time ___:___ AM/PM	Survey Location

C. Where are you staying tonight? / Where did you stay last night?

(Surveyor – pull answer from screening) (PiT C - Ontario required question)

a. <input type="checkbox"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER...END NOW	c. <input type="checkbox"/> SOMEONE ELSE'S PLACE ->ASK C1 AND C2	f. <input type="checkbox"/> EMERGENCY SHELTER, DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SHELTER
b. <input type="checkbox"/> OWN APARTMENT/HOUSE...END NOW	d. <input type="checkbox"/> MOTEL/HOTEL ->ASK C2	g. <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSITIONAL SHELTER/HOUSING
	e. <input type="checkbox"/> HOSPITAL, JAIL, PRISON, REMAND CENTRE >ASK C2	h. <input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC SPACE (E.G., SIDEWALK, PARK, FOREST, BUS SHELTER)
		i. <input type="checkbox"/> VEHICLE (CAR, VAN, RV, TRUCK)
		j. <input type="checkbox"/> MAKESHIFT SHELTER, TENT OR SHACK
		k. <input type="checkbox"/> ABANDONED/VACANT BUILDING
		l. <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER UNSHELTERED LOCATION
		m. <input type="checkbox"/> RESPONDENT DOESN'T KNOW [LIKELY HOMELESS]

C1: Can you stay there as long as you want or is this a temporary situation? (Surveyor - from screening)

C2: Do you have your own house or apartment you can safely return to? (Surveyor - from screening)

a. <input type="checkbox"/> AS LONG AS THEY WANT
b. <input type="checkbox"/> TEMPORARY ->ASK C2
c. <input type="checkbox"/> DON'T KNOW ->ASK C2
d. <input type="checkbox"/> DECLINE

a. <input type="checkbox"/> YES...END NOW
b. <input type="checkbox"/> NO
c. <input type="checkbox"/> DON'T KNOW
d. <input type="checkbox"/> DECLINE

Thank you for agreeing to take part in the survey. Please note that you will receive \$20 cash as a thank you for your participation.

## BEGIN SURVEY

1. What family members are staying with you tonight? [Indicate survey numbers for adults. Check all that apply]

<input type="checkbox"/> NONE	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER ADULT - Survey #: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> PARTNER - Survey #: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER
<input type="checkbox"/> CHILD(REN)/DEPENDENT(S)	
[indicate gender and age for each]	
GENDER	
AGE	
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

For the next questions, "homelessness" means any time when you have been without a secure place to live, including sleeping in shelters, on the streets, or living temporarily with others.

2. How old are you? [OR] What year were you born? [If unsure, ask for best estimate]

<input type="radio"/> AGE _____	<b>OR</b>	<input type="radio"/> YEAR BORN _____	<input type="radio"/> DON'T KNOW	<input type="radio"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER
---------------------------------	-----------	---------------------------------------	----------------------------------	---

3. How old were you the first time you experienced homelessness?

<input type="radio"/> AGE _____	<input type="radio"/> DON'T KNOW	<input type="radio"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER
---------------------------------	----------------------------------	---

4. In total, how much time have you been homeless over the PAST YEAR? [Best estimate.]

<input type="radio"/> LENGTH _____ DAYS   WEEKS   MONTHS	<input type="radio"/> DON'T KNOW	<input type="radio"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER
--	----------------------------------	---

5. In total, how many different times have you experienced homelessness over the PAST YEAR? [Best estimate.]

<input type="radio"/> NUMBER OF TIMES _____ [Includes this time]	<input type="radio"/> DON'T KNOW	<input type="radio"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER
--	----------------------------------	---

6. Have you stayed in an emergency shelter in the past year? [Give local examples of homeless shelters]

<input type="radio"/> YES	<input type="radio"/> NO	<input type="radio"/> DON'T KNOW	<input type="radio"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER
---------------------------	--------------------------	----------------------------------	---

7. How long have you been in this area?

<input type="radio"/> LENGTH _____ DAYS / WEEKS / MONTHS / YEARS	<b>Where did you live before you came here?</b>
<input type="radio"/> ALWAYS BEEN HERE	<input type="radio"/> COMMUNITY _____ PROVINCE _____
<input type="radio"/> DON'T KNOW	<input type="radio"/> OR COUNTRY _____
<input type="radio"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER	<input type="radio"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER

8. Did you come to Canada as an immigrant, refugee or refugee claimant?

<input type="radio"/> YES, IMMIGRANT ----->	<b>If YES:</b>	<b>How long have you been in Canada?</b>
<input type="radio"/> YES, REFUGEE----->		<input type="radio"/> LENGTH: _____ DAYS   WEEKS   MONTHS   YEARS
<input type="radio"/> YES, REFUGEE CLAIMANT ----->		<input type="radio"/> OR DATE: ____/____/____ DAY / MONTH / YEAR
<input type="radio"/> NO		<input type="radio"/> DON'T KNOW
<input type="radio"/> DON'T KNOW		<input type="radio"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER
<input type="radio"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER		

9. Do you identify as Indigenous or do you have Indigenous ancestry? This includes First Nations with or without status, Métis, or Inuit. [If yes, please follow-up to specify.]

<input type="radio"/> YES ----->	<b>If YES:</b>	<input type="radio"/> FIRST NATIONS (with or without status)
<input type="radio"/> NO		<input type="radio"/> INUIT
<input type="radio"/> DON'T KNOW		<input type="radio"/> MÉTIS
<input type="radio"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER		<input type="radio"/> HAVE INDIGENOUS ANCESTRY

10. Have you ever had any service in the Canadian Military or RCMP? [Military includes Canadian Navy, Army, or Air Force]

<input type="radio"/> YES, MILITARY	<input type="radio"/> NO	<input type="radio"/> DON'T KNOW	<input type="radio"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER
<input type="radio"/> YES, RCMP			

11. What gender do you identify with? [Show list.]

<input type="radio"/> MALE / MAN	<input type="radio"/> TRANS FEMALE / TRANS WOMAN	<input type="radio"/> NOT LISTED: _____
<input type="radio"/> FEMALE / WOMAN	<input type="radio"/> TRANS MALE / TRANS MAN	<input type="radio"/> DON'T KNOW
<input type="radio"/> TWO-SPIRIT	<input type="radio"/> GENDERQUEER/GENDER NON-CONFORMING	<input type="radio"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER

12. How do you describe your sexual orientation, for example straight, gay, lesbian? [Show list.]

<input type="radio"/> STRAIGHT/HETEROSEXUAL	<input type="radio"/> BISEXUAL	<input type="radio"/> QUEER	<input type="radio"/> DON'T KNOW
<input type="radio"/> GAY	<input type="radio"/> TWO-SPIRIT	<input type="radio"/> NOT LISTED: _____	<input type="radio"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER
<input type="radio"/> LESBIAN	<input type="radio"/> QUESTIONING		

**13. What happened that caused you to lose your housing most recently?** [Do not read the options. Check all that apply. "Housing" does not include temporary arrangements (e.g., couch surfing) or shelter stays.]

<input type="checkbox"/> ILLNESS OR MEDICAL CONDITION	<input type="checkbox"/> CONFLICT WITH: PARENT / GUARDIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> ADDICTION OR SUBSTANCE USE	<input type="checkbox"/> CONFLICT WITH: SPOUSE / PARTNER
<input type="checkbox"/> JOB LOSS	<input type="checkbox"/> INCARCERATED (JAIL OR PRISON)
<input type="checkbox"/> UNABLE TO PAY RENT OR MORTGAGE	<input type="checkbox"/> HOSPITALIZATION OR TREATMENT PROGRAM
<input type="checkbox"/> UNSAFE HOUSING CONDITIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER REASON _____
<input type="checkbox"/> EXPERIENCED ABUSE BY: PARENT / GUARDIAN	<input type="checkbox"/> DON'T KNOW
<input type="checkbox"/> EXPERIENCED ABUSE BY: SPOUSE / PARTNER	<input type="checkbox"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER

**14. What are your sources of income?** [Please read list and check all that apply]

<input type="checkbox"/> EMPLOYMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DISABILITY BENEFIT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER SOURCE: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> INFORMAL/SELF-EMPLOYMENT (E.G., BOTTLE RETURNS, PANHANDLING)	<input type="checkbox"/> SENIORS BENEFITS (E.G., CPP/OAS/GIS)	<input type="checkbox"/> NO INCOME
<input type="checkbox"/> EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE	<input type="checkbox"/> GST REFUND	<input type="checkbox"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER
<input type="checkbox"/> WELFARE/SOCIAL ASSISTANCE	<input type="checkbox"/> CHILD AND FAMILY TAX BENEFITS	
	<input type="checkbox"/> MONEY FROM FAMILY/FRIENDS	

**ONTARIO SPECIFIC QUESTIONS (CO2+, CO3, CO9 and Ontario Health Question) (Available in HIFIS Market Place)**

**15. Have you ever been in foster care and/or a group home?**

<input type="checkbox"/> YES IF YES, HOW LONG AGO WAS THAT? LENGTH (IN YEARS) _____
<input type="checkbox"/> NO
<input type="checkbox"/> DON'T KNOW
<input type="checkbox"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER

**16. People may identify as belonging to a particular racial group. For example, some people may identify as Black or African-Canadian, other people may identify as Asian or South Asian and other people may identify as white. What racialized identity do you identify with?** [Do not list categories. Select all that apply]

<input type="checkbox"/> ABORIGINAL OR INDIGENOUS	<input type="checkbox"/> BLACK OR AFRICAN CANADIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> ARAB	<input type="checkbox"/> FILIPINO
<input type="checkbox"/> ASIAN (E.G., CHINESE, KOREAN, JAPANESE, ETC.)	<input type="checkbox"/> HISPANIC OR LATIN AMERICAN
<input type="checkbox"/> SOUTH-EAST ASIAN (E.G., VIETNAMESE, CAMBODIAN, MALAYSIAN, LAOTIAN, ETC.)	<input type="checkbox"/> WHITE (E.G., EUROPEAN-CANADIAN)
<input type="checkbox"/> SOUTH ASIAN (E.G., EAST INDIAN, PAKISTANI, SRI LANKAN, ETC.)	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) _____
<input type="checkbox"/> WEST ASIAN (E.G., IRANIAN, AFGHAN, ETC.)	<input type="checkbox"/> DON'T KNOW
	<input type="checkbox"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER

**17. In what language do you feel best able to express yourself?**

<input type="radio"/> ENGLISH	<input type="radio"/> NO PREFERENCE	<input type="radio"/> DON'T KNOW
<input type="radio"/> FRENCH	<input type="radio"/> OTHER (please specify) _____	<input type="radio"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER

**18. Do you identify as having any of the following?**

Chronic/Acute Medical Condition	Physical Disability	Addiction	Mental Health Issue
<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
<input type="checkbox"/> DON'T KNOW	<input type="checkbox"/> DON'T KNOW	<input type="checkbox"/> DON'T KNOW	<input type="checkbox"/> DON'T KNOW
<input type="checkbox"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER	<input type="checkbox"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER	<input type="checkbox"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER	<input type="checkbox"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER

19a. During the past 12 months, have you used any... **DO NOT READ OUT EXAMPLES UNLESS RESPONDENT NEEDS CLARIFICATION**

Alcohol?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> DON'T KNOW <input type="checkbox"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER
Opioids? (Prescription or other -eg. Codeine, Percocet, Hydromorphone, morphine, Demerol, heroin)	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> DON'T KNOW <input type="checkbox"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER
Stimulants? (Prescription or other - eg. Ritalin, Adderall, cocaine, crack, speed, methamphetamines)	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> DON'T KNOW <input type="checkbox"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER
Sedatives? (eg. Diazepam, Valium, lorazepam, Ativan, alprazolam, Xanax, clonazepam, Rivotril)	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> DON'T KNOW <input type="checkbox"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER
Marijuana? (eg. Marijuana, hashish, hash oil or other cannabis derivatives)	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> DON'T KNOW <input type="checkbox"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER
Hallucinogens? (eg. PCP, Ecstasy, LSD, acid, magic mushrooms, mescaline, angel dust, salvia)	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> DON'T KNOW <input type="checkbox"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER
Inhalants? (Sniffed glue, gasoline, other solvents)	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> DON'T KNOW <input type="checkbox"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER
Non-beverage alcohol? (eg. Mouthwash, rubbing alcohol, hand sanitizer, hairspray)	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> DON'T KNOW <input type="checkbox"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER

19b. In the past 12 months, have you injected drugs?

- YES
- NO
- DON'T KNOW
- DECLINE TO ANSWER

**IF NO TO BOTH 19 A AND 19B MOVE ON TO QUESTION 20a**

19c. Has your substance use increased since you've become homeless?

- YES
- NO
- DON'T KNOW
- DECLINE TO ANSWER

19d. During the past 12 months, because of your substance use, was there ever a time when...

You had legal problems?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> DON'T KNOW <input type="checkbox"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER
You had housing problems?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> DON'T KNOW <input type="checkbox"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER
You had difficulty learning things?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> DON'T KNOW <input type="checkbox"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER
You had physical health problems?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> DON'T KNOW <input type="checkbox"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER

If you are not from this area...

20a. What brought you to this community? \_\_\_\_\_

20b. If you were to return to your home community, would you have housing available?

- YES
- NO
- DON'T KNOW
- DECLINE TO ANSWER

20c. Where would you stay if you went back to your home community?

*Prompt for where/what type (eg. With family, couch surfing, immediate family)*

21a. Were you incarcerated in the past 12 months?

- YES
- NO
- DON'T KNOW
- DECLINE TO ANSWER

21b. When you were incarcerated, was housing a condition of your release?

- YES
- NO
- DON'T KNOW
- DECLINE TO ANSWER

21c. When you were incarcerated, were you ever denied bail because you didn't have a place to stay?

- YES
- NO
- DON'T KNOW
- DECLINE TO ANSWER

21d. Where did you stay when you were released? \_\_\_\_\_





The Lakehead Social Planning Council (LSPC), The Thunder Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre (TBIFC) and the District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board (TBDSSAB) would like to collect your personal information for the following purposes:

- 1) Evaluating and improving affordable housing; related programs/services,
  - 2) Research, and education advocacy, lobbying about homelessness in Canada , and the 20,000 Homes Campaign
  - 3) Prioritizing you for and referring you to affordable housing and/or related programs/services.
- TBIFC and TBDSSAB take responsibility for contacting within one year and helping you access appropriate housing services and supports, based on an assessment of your needs. As needed, additional, prior consent will be requested to share your personal information with other housing supports and services in Thunder Bay.
  - Your personal information will be securely stored at TBDSSAB and only personnel who need to know your information will have access to it. All of the individuals who will have access to your personal information will have signed confidentiality agreements to assist in the protection of your information.
  - The agencies collecting this information will disclose your personal information if there is reason to believe you may hurt yourself or someone else. Otherwise, your personal information will not be shared with any other third parties or for any other purposes other than set out on this form without your prior, additional consent.
  - The Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness (CAEH) is focused on ending chronic homelessness in 20 communities and housing 20,000 of Canada's most vulnerable homeless people by July 1, 2020. Before sharing your personal information with the 20,000 Homes Campaign, any identifying information will be removed so that you will not be able to be identified or traced by the 20,000 Homes Campaign/CAEH.
  - If you decide not to provide your consent, you will not be declined services; however, for the purposes of prioritizing you for affordable housing, without your consent, we may not be able to represent your level of need for housing as effectively. You may decide to limit your consent by only answering the questions and providing information that you are comfortable with disclosing.
  - You can change your mind and withdraw your consent at a later date by letting us know at the TBDSSAB at 766-2111 ex. 4202.. We will make reasonable efforts not to use or disclose your information in any way following the time you withdraw your consent.
  - The agencies listed that are collecting and storing this information will destroy or de-identify your personal information within twenty years of the last date you were served or assisted in any way by local housing agencies.

**I AGREE WITH THE ABOVE AND CONSENT TO MY PERSONAL INFORMATION BEING COLLECTED, USED, STORED, SHARED AND DESTROYED AS DESCRIBED IN THIS CONSENT FORM.**

**Your signature (or mark) below indicates that you have read (or been read) all of the information provided above and agree.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature (or Mark) of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name of Participant

**If consent given by mark or verbally:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Witness

**VI-SPDAT FOR SINGLE ADULTS (Do not change the order or wording of these questions) (scored)**

**Basic Information**

<b>First Name</b>	<b>Nickname</b>	<b>Last Name</b>
<b>Consent to participate</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>

**A. History of Housing and Homelessness**

1. Where do you sleep most frequently? (check one)		
<input type="radio"/> Shelters <input type="radio"/> Couch Surfing <input type="radio"/> Outdoors <input type="radio"/> Other: _____ <input type="radio"/> Refused		
2. How long has it been since you lived in permanent stable housing?	yrs/mo/d	Refused
3. In the last year, how many times have you been homeless? (completed with Q5 above)		Refused

**B. Risks**

4. In the past six months, how many times have you...			
a. Received health care at an emergency department/room?			Refused
b. Taken an ambulance to the hospital?			Refused
c. Been hospitalized as an inpatient?			Refused
d. Used a crisis service, including sexual assault crisis, mental health crisis, family/intimate violence, distress centers and suicide prevention hotlines?			Refused
e. Talked to police because you witnessed a crime, were the victim of a crime, or the alleged perpetrator of a crime or because the police told you that you must move along?			Refused
f. Stayed one or more nights in a holding cell, jail or prison, whether that was a short-term stay like the drunk tank, a longer stay for a more serious offence, or anything in between?			Refused
5. Have you been attacked or beaten up since you've become homeless?	Y	N	Refused
6. Have you threatened to or tried to harm yourself or anyone else in the last year?	Y	N	Refused
7. Do you have any legal stuff going on right now that may result in you being locked up, having to pay fines, or that make it more difficult to rent a place to live?	Y	N	Refused
8. Does anybody force or trick you to do things that you do not want to do?	Y	N	Refused
9. Do you ever do things that may be considered to be risky like exchange sex for money, run drugs for someone, have unprotected sex with someone you don't know, share a needle, or anything like that?	Y	N	Refused

## C. Socialization & Daily Functioning

10. Is there any person, past landlord, business, bookie, dealer, or government group like the CRA that thinks you owe them money?	Y	N	Refused
<del>11. Do you get any money from the government, a pension, an inheritance, working under the table, a regular job, or anything like that? (completed with Q14 above)</del>	<del>Y</del>	<del>N</del>	<del>Refused</del>
12. Do you have planned activities, other than just surviving, that make you feel happy and fulfilled?	Y	N	Refused
13. Are you currently able to take care of basic needs like bathing, changing clothes, using a restroom, getting food and clean water and other things like that?	Y	N	Refused
14. Is your current homelessness in any way caused by a relationship that broke down, an unhealthy or abusive relationship, or because family or friends caused you to become evicted?	Y	N	Refused

## D. Wellness

15. Have you ever had to leave an apartment, shelter program, or other place you were staying because of your physical health?	Y	N	Refused
16. Do you have any chronic health issues with your liver, kidneys, stomach, lungs or heart?	Y	N	Refused
17. Do you have any physical disabilities that would limit the type of housing you could access, or would make it hard to live independently because you'd need help?	Y	N	Refused
18. When you are sick or not feeling well, do you avoid getting help?	Y	N	Refused
19. <i>FOR FEMALE RESPONDENTS ONLY:</i> Are you currently pregnant?	Y	N	N/A or Refused
20. Has your drinking or drug use led you to being kicked out of an apartment or program where you were staying in the past?	Y	N	Refused
21. Will drinking or drug use make it difficult for you to stay housed or afford your housing?	Y	N	Refused
22. Have you ever had trouble maintaining your housing, or been kicked out of an apartment, shelter program or other place you were staying, because of:			
a. A mental health issue or concern?	Y	N	Refused
b. A past head injury?	Y	N	Refused
c. A learning disability, developmental disability, or other impairment?	Y	N	Refused
23. Do you have any mental health or brain issues that would make it hard for you to live independently because you'd need help?	Y	N	Refused
24. Are there any medications that a doctor said you should be taking that, for whatever reason, you are not taking?	Y	N	Refused

25. Are there any medications like painkillers that you don't take the way the doctor prescribed or where you sell the medication?	Y	N	Refused
26. <b>YES OR NO:</b> Has your current period of homelessness been caused by an experience of emotional, physical, psychological, sexual, or other type of abuse, or by any other trauma you have experienced?	Y	N	Refused

## Follow-Up Questions

On a regular day, where is it easiest to find you and what time of day is easiest to do so?	Place:  Time: or Morning/Afternoon/Evening/Night
Is there a phone number and/or email where someone can safely get in touch with you or leave you a message?	phone: (____)____ :_____  email:

# Appendix 3

## Emergency Resource Lines Information Sheet

# Emergency Resource Lines



**Emergency Lines**

Police, Fire, Ambulance - Emergency 911  
 Anishinabek Police Services 625-0232  
 1-800-438-5638  
 Nishnawbe-Aski Police 1-800-654-6277  
 Poison Control 1-800-268-9017  
 OPP 1-888-310-1122  
 211 211




**Crisis Lines**

Assaulted Women's Helpline Fem'Aide Crisis Line  
 Toll Free: 1-866-863-0511 Crisis Line: 1-877-336-2433  
 TTY: 1-866-863-7868 TTY: 1-866-860-7082

Beendigen Inc.-Native Women's Crisis Home Thunder Bay Crisis Response Service  
 Crisis Line: 346-4357 Call: 346-8282  
 Toll Free: 1-888-200-9997 Toll Free: 1-888-269-3100

Sexual Abuse Centre Thunder Bay Faye Peterson Transition House  
 Crisis Line: 344-4502 Call: 345-0450  
 Toll Free: 1-866-311-5927 Toll Free: 1-800-465-6971




**Help Lines**

Al Anon Alateen 1-888-425-2666  
 Centr'Elles 684-1955 or 1-888-415-4156  
 Connex Ontario Mental Health Helpline 1-866-531-2600  
 Drug and Alcohol Help Line 1-800-565-8603  
 First Nations and Inuit Hope for Wellness 1-855-242-3310  
 Good2talk - Post-Secondary Student Helpline 1-866-925-5454  
 Kids Help Phone 1-800-668-6868  
 Kinna-aweya Legal Clinic 344-2478 or 1-888-373-3309  
 Motherisk 1-877-439-2744  
 Motherisk (Alcohol and Substance Use Helpline) 1-877-327-4636  
 Ontario Problem Gambling Helpline 1-888-230-3505  
 Ontario Victim Support Line 1-888-579-2888  
 Operation Come Home 1-800-668-4663  
 Public Health Inspector 625-5900 or 1-888-294-6630  
 Seniors Safety Line 1-866-299-1011  
 Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Treatment Centre 684-6751  
 Talk4Healing 1-855-554-4325  
 Thunder Bay Police Non-Emergency Line 684-1200  
 Victim/Witness Assistance 626-7120 or 1-888-394-6930

**Report Created in Partnership With:**



**THE DISTRICT OF THUNDER BAY  
SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION BOARD**



lakehead  
social planning  
council

**Other Point-in-Time Count and Registry Week Partners:**

**Canada** 



THUNDER BAY  
**Drug Strategy**