

2024 Saskatoon Point-in-Time Homelessness Count

HIGHLIGHTS AND
KEY FINDINGS



This project is funded by
the Government of Canada.

Canada 

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The 2024 Point-in-Time (PiT) Count Co-Leads (City of Saskatoon, Saskatoon Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) and the Community-University Institute for Social Research (CUISR)) would like to express our appreciation to the many individuals currently experiencing homelessness who generously shared their invaluable insights and personal stories, making this project possible.

Our sincere gratitude goes out to the many dedicated volunteers and partners who contributed their time and expertise to the PiT Count.

We also thank our partners at the Government of Canada for funding this project and for their continued critical role in this effort.

Together, these collective efforts reinforce our shared commitment to addressing homelessness in Saskatoon.

We also extend our gratitude to the following organizations for their invaluable participation on the 2024 PiT Count Advisory Committee and their support of this collaborative initiative:

- Canadian Centre for Housing Rights
- Central Urban Métis Federation Inc.
- City of Saskatoon - Parks
- Elder - Marlene Conron
- Elizabeth Fry Society of Saskatchewan
- Friendship Inn
- Lived Expert - David Fineday
- Métis Nation-Saskatchewan
- Prairie Harm Reduction
- Prairie Wild Consulting
- Quint Development Corporation
- Saskatchewan Health Authority
- Saskatoon Crisis Intervention Service
- Saskatoon Fire Department
- Saskatoon Food Bank & Learning Centre
- Saskatoon Police Service
- Saskatoon Poverty Reduction Partnership
- Saskatoon Transit
- Saskatoon Tribal Council
- Station 20 West
- The Salvation Army
- United Way of Saskatoon and Area
- YWCA

The PiT Count Co-Leads would also like to thank Saskatoon Co-op and the Sexual Health Clinic for their generous donations on the day of the Count.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2024 Point-in-Time (PiT) Homelessness Count conducted in Saskatoon on Tuesday, October 8, 2024, highlights a severe and escalating homelessness crisis. The community-led initiative identified at least 1,499 individuals experiencing homelessness, nearly tripling the number from the 2022 Count. This translates to approximately 5 homeless individuals per 1,000 residents, placing Saskatoon among the cities with the highest rates in Canada.

The Count reveals significant disparities, particularly the significant over-representation of Indigenous individuals, who make up over 80% of those experiencing homelessness. This points to systemic inequities and longstanding barriers to accessing safe and affordable housing.

Evictions are the primary factor contributing to homelessness, as reported by over half of the survey respondents. Additionally, one-third of respondents identified insufficient income as another major factor contributing to homelessness. Other critical issues include rising proportions of women, youth, seniors, and families among the homeless population, as well as the increasing visibility of unsheltered individuals sleeping in unsuitable conditions. Mental health and **additions** were the most frequently reported health related challenges among respondents, with over 60% indicating a mental health issue and over 80% dealing with substance abuse. These responses underscore the complexity and challenges faced by individuals experiencing homelessness.

Survey respondents clearly identified the barriers to housing for the homeless population. The primary barrier was the need for more financial resources, reported by 88.2% of respondents. Additionally, 81.6% highlighted the need for more services to assist in finding affordable housing, while 71.7% emphasized the importance of help with housing applications. Finally, 69.8% of respondents indicated that transportation to view housing would significantly reduce these barriers.

The PiT Count is part of the Government of Canada's Reaching Home program, a nationally coordinated initiative among designated communities across Canada that contributes to local and national understandings of homelessness. Coordinated by the City of Saskatoon, the Community-University Institute for Social Research (CUISR) and the Saskatoon Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP), the PiT Count used standardized methodologies and survey questions aligned with national standards, with built-in flexibility to capture local context.

The data gathered from the Count provides detailed findings, demographic breakdowns, and service use patterns to inform effective, culturally sensitive, and long-term policies, programs, and interventions aimed at addressing homelessness. Information collected through the PiT Count can be used to identify overrepresentation of demographic characteristics, better understand pathways into homelessness, build collaboration between homeless servicing sectors, identify areas of greatest and most urgent need, and garner public support.

While the PiT count is an essential tool of measuring homelessness, it is important to recognize that its purpose is to present a *snapshot* of individuals experiencing homelessness during a 24-hour period, capturing the minimum number of individuals experiencing homelessness at a specific point-in-time.

For comprehensive details and further analysis, please refer to the full technical report produced by the CUISR.



KEY TERMS

Administrative Data – Information collected by organizations or institutions (i.e. hospitals) as part of their regular operations or services.

Encampments – Outdoor locations with a group of tents, makeshift shelters or other long-term outdoor settlements, where two or more individuals are staying.

Hidden Homelessness – Individuals experiencing hidden homelessness include those living temporarily with others without guaranteed residency (i.e., couch surfing) and staying in short-term rentals without secure tenure (i.e., self-funded motel/hotel).

Sheltered Homelessness – Individuals residing in emergency shelters. It may include people who receive hotel/motel vouchers in lieu of emergency shelter. It does not include people who have security of tenure or who are in social or supported/subsidized housing.

Systems – Refers to people experiencing homelessness who spend the night in a health or correctional facility, such as: an urgent care facility; emergency department; hospital in-patient ward; detox, treatment or rehabilitation centre; correctional facility; or police holding cell.

Transitional Housing – Intended to offer a supportive living environment for its residents, including offering them the experience, tools, knowledge, and opportunities for social and skill development to become more independent and transition from homelessness to secure housing. It is considered an intermediate step between emergency shelter and supportive or independent housing, and has limits on how long an individual or family can stay.

Unsheltered Homelessness – Without any form of shelter and residing in public places (i.e. streets, park, vacant buildings) or in areas not fit for habitation (i.e. cars)



DEFINITIONS OF HOMELESSNESS

Chronic Homelessness – Individuals who are currently experiencing homelessness and who meet at least 1 of the following criteria:

- they have a total of at least 6 months (180 days) of homelessness over the past year (not necessarily consecutive days)
- they have recurrent experiences of homelessness over the past 3 years, with a cumulative duration of at least 18 months (546 days)

Episodic Homelessness – Individuals that are homeless for less than 6 months (180 days) over the course of a year (not necessarily consecutive days); and/or, recurrent episodes of homelessness over three years that is less than 18 months (546 days) total.

Indigenous Homelessness – Indigenous homelessness is a human condition that describes First Nations, Métis 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.

Youth Homelessness – Refers to the situation and experience of young people between the ages of 13 and 24 who are living independently of parents and/or caregivers, but do not have the means or ability to acquire a stable, safe or consistent residence.



METHODOLOGY AND LIMITATIONS

Methodology

The 2024 PiT Count used a multi-method approach that combined indoor and outdoor enumerations, direct observations, and administrative data collection. Key points include:

Timing and Scope:

The count was a “snapshot” taken on October 8, 2024—capturing data across a range of settings including unsheltered locations, emergency shelters, encampments, and transitional housing.

Data Sources:

The methodology integrated survey responses, direct enumeration of individuals (including “hidden homeless”), and data from service agencies (e.g., emergency shelters and transitional housing providers). This multi-faceted approach aimed to account for both visible and less visible segments of the homeless population.

Training and Protocols:

Volunteers received comprehensive training to ensure respectful and accurate data collection. The survey instrument was adapted from previous counts but with updated questions to reflect current service needs and demographics—including a dedicated focus on Indigenous identity and experiences. The methodology adheres to the standards set by the national coordinated PiT Count protocols and was approved by the relevant ethics bodies, ensuring the protection of respondents’ rights throughout the count process.

Limitations

Although the 2024 PiT Count used standardized and ethical methodology, it does have some limitations worth highlighting, namely:

- **Single Night Snapshot:** May not fully represent fluctuating or episodic homelessness.
- **Potential Under-Counting:** Likely under-represents hidden homelessness and those avoiding contact.
- **Voluntary Participation:** May introduce demographic or experiential bias.
- **Changes in Methodology:** Expanded outreach could affect historical comparisons.
- **Excluded Populations:** Does not account for those at imminent risk of homelessness or in precarious living arrangements.

Despite these limitations, the PiT Count remains an essential tool for tracking trends and informing policy.

SASKATOON'S 2024 PIT COUNT

Saskatoon's Count Day:

Tuesday, October 8, 2024

Surveyed Hours:

11:00 a.m. – 11:00 p.m.

Weather Conditions:



High of 22° C and
sunny during the day



Overnight low
of 3° C



200+

Volunteers

Counted and surveyed
individuals experiencing
homelessness.



22

Outreach Teams

Teams who covered
quadrants of Saskatoon
to collect outreach and
encampment data.



38

Facilities & Programs

Collected administrative
and systems data for
sheltered individuals
experiencing homelessness.

15

Stationary Locations

28

Study Areas

Covering 24 of 65
neighbourhoods

All volunteers participated in a mandatory
training session prior to the count.

- 7 different training sessions were offered to
accommodate various schedules.
- 1 additional optional supplementary training
session was available for those seeking extra
practice in administering the survey.



COUNT RESULTS

Counted without permanent shelter.

1,499

of which 783 were surveyed

- 1,499 people including 315 children and 175 youth were counted as without permanent shelter.
- 15.5% did not specify their age.

Adults
(25-64)
50.1%

Youth
(13-24)
11.71%

Children
(0-12)
21%

Seniors
(65+)
1.7%

62

(4.1%) were counted in encampment surveys

442

(29.5%) were counted in transitional housing

216

(14.4%) were counted in emergency shelters

30

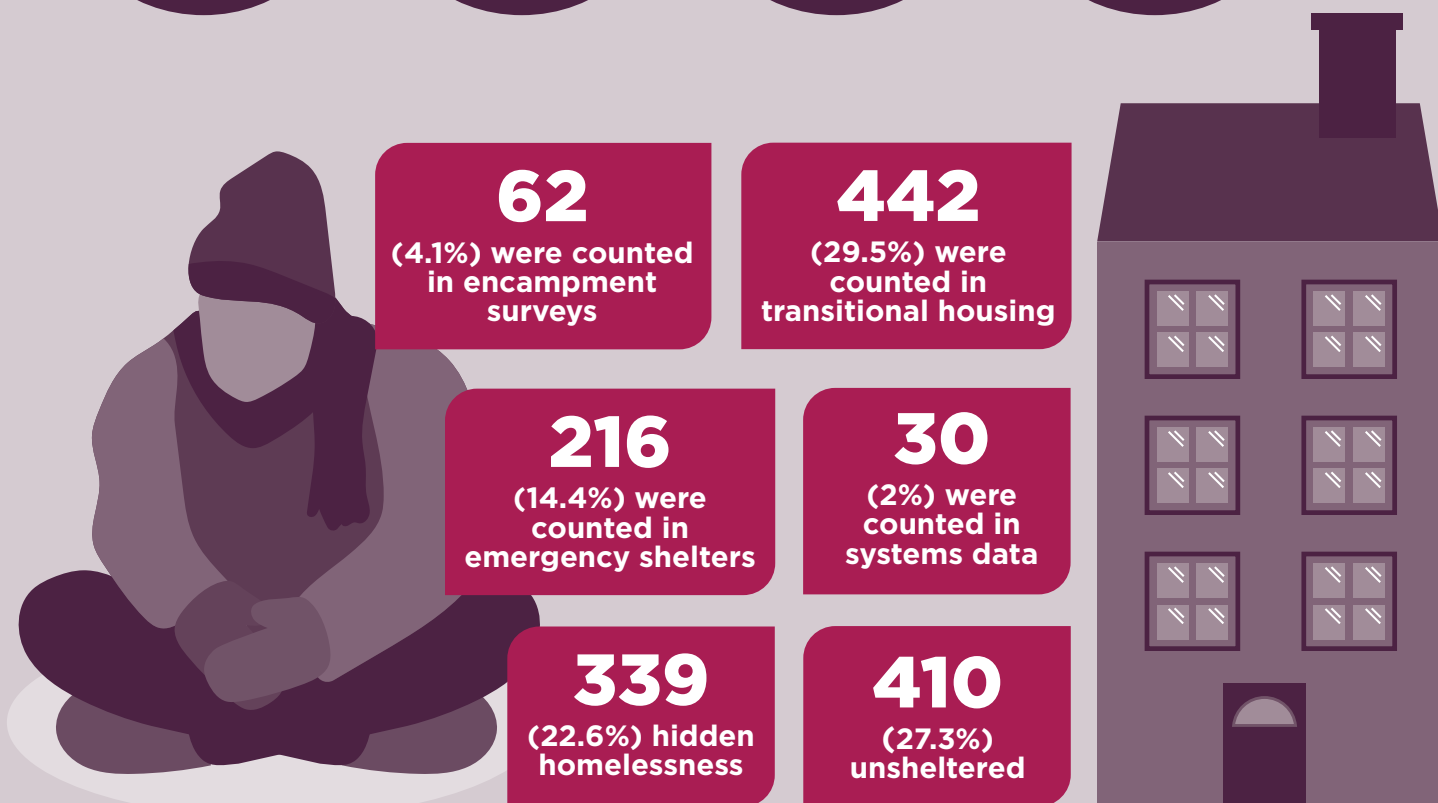
(2%) were counted in systems data

339

(22.6%) hidden homelessness

410

(27.3%) unsheltered



Although parental consent is typically required for research participants under the age of 18, youth who were in no distress and gave consent were eligible to be surveyed.

WHO IS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS?



50.1%
male



46.7%
women



3%
gender diverse
people (including two
spirit, transgender,
and non-binary)



80.7%
Indigenous



4.2%
immigrant,
refugee or refugee
claimants



2.7%
military or RCMP

Of 629 respondents, 90.6% reported being straight or heterosexual; 8.3% reported being bisexual, two-spirit, pansexual, asexual, gay, or questioning.

50.8% reported experiences of living in foster care or a youth group home.

27.02% reported having children in the foster care system.

FIRST EXPERIENCE OF HOMELESSNESS



50.3%

as adults (25-64)



39.9%

as youth (13-24)



8.8%

as children (0-12)

CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS

Reported chronic homelessness (without a permanent address for more than six months). Up from 59% in 2022.

64%

36%

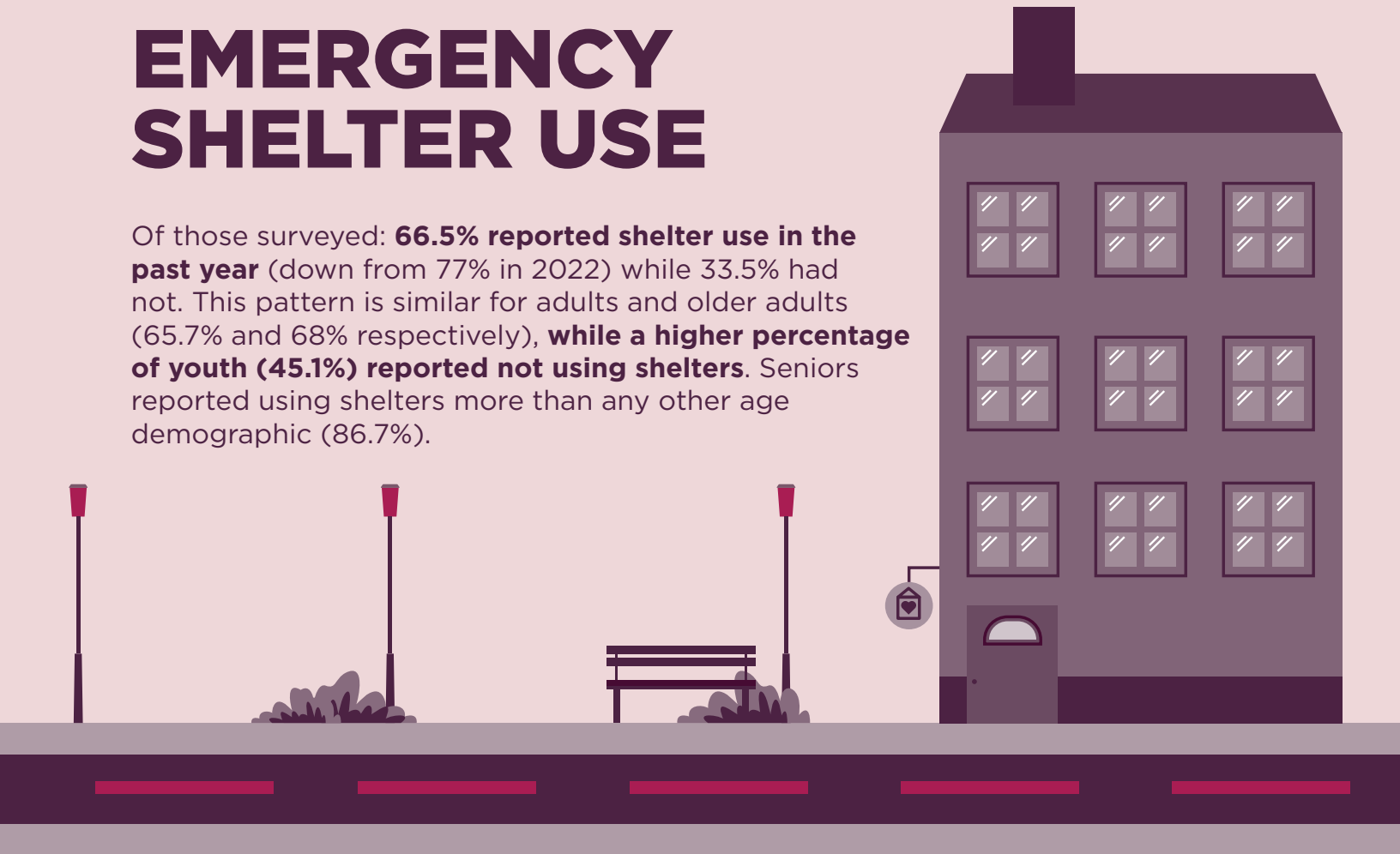
Reported non-chronic homelessness.

Reported experience of homelessness for about half or more of the past three years.

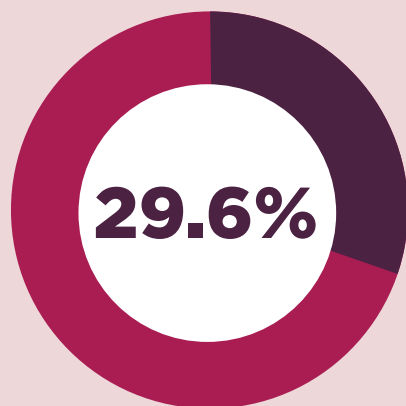
71.4%

EMERGENCY SHELTER USE

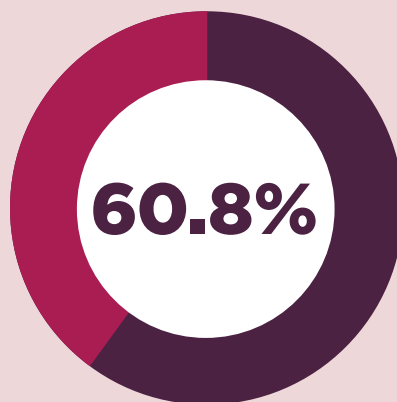
Of those surveyed: **66.5% reported shelter use in the past year** (down from 77% in 2022) while 33.5% had not. This pattern is similar for adults and older adults (65.7% and 68% respectively), **while a higher percentage of youth (45.1%) reported not using shelters**. Seniors reported using shelters more than any other age demographic (86.7%).



LENGTH OF RESIDENCE IN SASKATOON



had “always” lived in Saskatoon



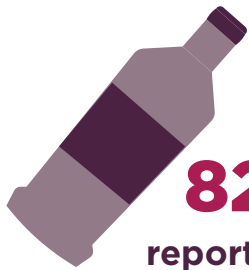
had been a resident for over 5 years

70.4%
migrated to Saskatoon from another location in Saskatchewan

11.9%
came from Alberta

1.6%
came from outside Canada

HEALTH CHALLENGES



82.3%

reported dealing
with a substance
abuse issue



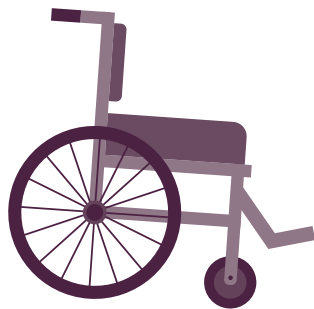
60.6%

reported a
mental health
issue



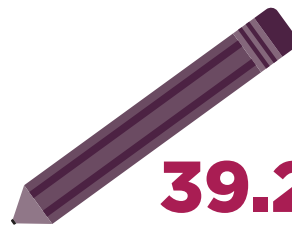
57.3%

living with an
illness or medical
condition



48%

had a physical
limitation



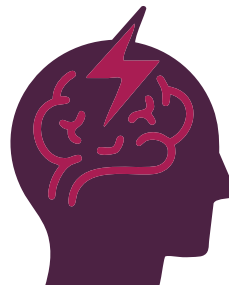
39.2%

reported learning
or cognitive
limitations



37.1%

reported sense
(hearing or
seeing) issues



29.2%

reported
acquired brain
injury

CAUSES OF HOUSING LOSS

Housing and financial issues:

55.1% reported eviction

32.8% insufficient income

11.4% conflicts with landlords

10.2% unfit/unsafe housing

5.9% complaints

5.3% discrimination

2.8% left the community

Interpersonal and family issues (leading reasons):

13.7% conflict with spouse/partner

6.3% conflict with parent/guardian

3% conflict with friend/roommate

Health or corrections category:

19.6% substance use

6.1% incarceration

3.8% mental health

3.6% physical health



SOURCES OF INCOME

48.9% Welfare or social assistance

20.8% Disability benefits

13.6% Informal income such as panhandling and bottle returns

5.8% GST/HST refunds

3.9% Family and friends

2.5% Employment (full-time)

2.5% Seniors' benefits

2.2% Child and family tax benefits

1.9% Employment (part time)



EDUCATION PROFILE

41.9% did not graduate high school

30.4% had completed high school

18.0% had at least some level of post secondary or graduate education



IMPACTED BY VIOLENCE WHILE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS (67%)

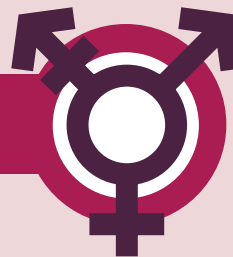
66.2% men



69.1% women



100% non-binary people



70% two-spirit people



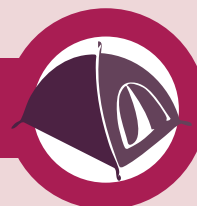
73.2% unsheltered



59.7% sheltered



73.1% encampment



63.8% hidden homelessness



WHAT WOULD HELP FIND STABLE, AFFORDABLE HOUSING?



88.2%
MORE
MONEY



81.6%
getting help to
find affordable
housing



71.7%
assistance
with housing
applications



69.8%
help with
transportation
to see housing



59.1%
help
getting I.D



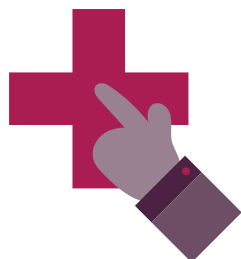
57.4%
mental health
support



51.9%
harm reduction
support



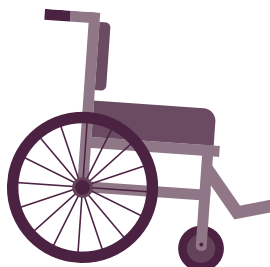
50.9%
cultural
supports



50.7%
help in
addressing
health needs



40%
help with
legal issues



37%
help with
disability
accessibility



35.3%
managing
alcohol issues

SERVICES ACCESSED

77.9% Libraries

70.2% Food providers

61% Shelters

56% Health clinics

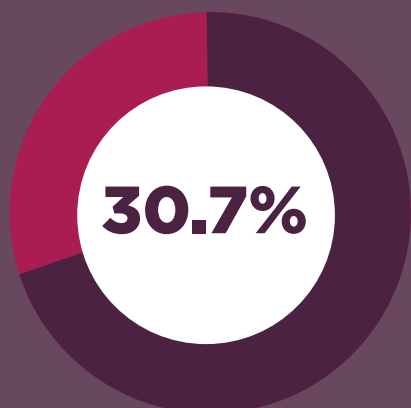
53.2% Emergency rooms

50.3% Drop-ins at social serving agencies

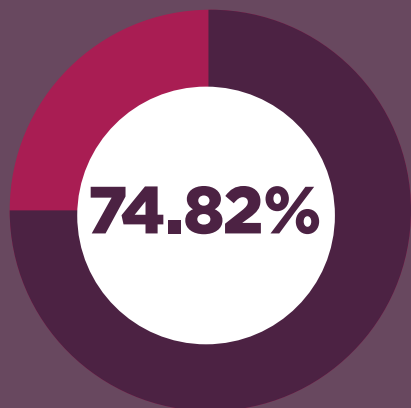
45.4% Hospitals



WAITING LIST FOR HOUSING



reported being on one or more waiting lists for housing



had spent between 60 and 100 days on one or more waiting lists

Four most commonly noted housing providers:

22.4%
Saskatoon Tribal Council: Cress Housing

18.4%
Saskatoon Housing Authority

15.2%
Quint Development Corporation

12%
Central Urban Métis Federation Inc. (CUMFI)

COMPARISON BETWEEN SASKATOON PIT COUNTS

Findings across Saskatoon PiT Homelessness Counts
(2008, 2012, 2015, 2018, 2022 and 2024)

	2008	2012	2015	2018	2022	2024
Date of the Count	May 22	Sep 24	Jun 22	Apr 18	Apr 28	Oct 8
Total sheltered and unsheltered	260	379	450	475	550	1,499
Unsheltered (Adults)	17%	27%	9%	18.95%	5.50%	14.4%*
Sheltered (Adults)	77%	73%	80%	56.4%	24.4%	12.5%*
Total Children (Percentage)	12%	3%	10%	2.30%	4.70%	21%*
Total Hidden Homelessness	–	–	35 or 7.8%	86 or 18.1%	30 or 5.5%	339 or 22.6%
Total Self-Identified Indigenous People (Percentage)	47%	66%	45%	85.5%	90.10%	80.70%
On Waiting List for Housing	20%	14%	27%	26.10%	39%	30.7%

* For the 2022 and 2024 PiT Count, a child was defined within the 0-12 years range. Those from 13-24 years were defined as youth, while only those between 25 and 44 were defined as adults, those between 45 and 64 as older adults; seniors were 65+.

RATE OF HOMELESSNESS

The Homelessness Rate is the number of people experiencing homelessness per 1,000 residents on the night of the PiT Count over the years.

Year	Population (as at July 1)	Pit Count	Homelessness Rate (per 1,000 residents)
2008 (May)	220,105	260	1.2
2012 (Sep)	237,296	379	1.6
2015 (Jun)	251,476	450	1.8
2018 (Apr)	266,509	475	1.8
2022 (Apr)	281,418	550	2.0
2024 (Oct)	308,626	1,499	4.9

Source (Statistics Canada Table 17-10-0155-01).

KEY FINDINGS

The findings from the 2024 PiT Count provide valuable insights into the current state of homelessness in Saskatoon. The following key themes emerged from the analysis of the data collected during the Count:

1. Homelessness continues to increase drastically, almost tripling since the 2022 PiT Count. In 2024, approximately 5 out of every 1,000 Saskatoon residents were counted as experiencing homelessness on the night of the Count, placing Saskatoon among the highest rates observed in comparable Canadian cities.
2. The number of children experiencing homelessness increased from 26 in 2022 to 315 in 2024.
3. The Indigenous population continues to be overrepresented among the unhoused population (80.7%), and despite representing only 11.5% of Saskatoon's general population.
4. Evictions and insufficient income were the top reported causes of housing loss.
5. Approximately 60% of the respondents reported having a mental health issue and over 80% reported dealing with substance abuse issues, underlining the complexities of homelessness.
6. Libraries and food banks were the services most used by those experiencing homelessness, with 77.9% of respondents reporting using the library, and 70.2% using food bank services. Shelters (61%), health clinics (56%), emergency rooms (53.2%) and hospital services (45.4%) were also used, which reinforces the links between homelessness and health.

The 2024 PiT Count identified 1,499 individuals experiencing homelessness. Unsheltered homelessness continues to escalate in Saskatoon, with the number of unsheltered individuals rising to 19.6% in 2024 up from 5.6% in 2022. These findings emphasize that while immediate shelter and support services are crucial, long-term strategies must directly address the economic and social underpinnings of homelessness.

"My home is my body. I just don't have a house."

Respondent

"More support for those with mental health issues. More acceptance, a second chance."

Respondent

"I cannot get income because I have no address."

Respondent



LIST OF PARTICIPATING FACILITIES & CLASSIFICATIONS

4 Emergency Shelters

- Saskatoon Interval House
- Saskatoon Tribal Council - Emergency Wellness Centre
- The Salvation Army
- YWCA

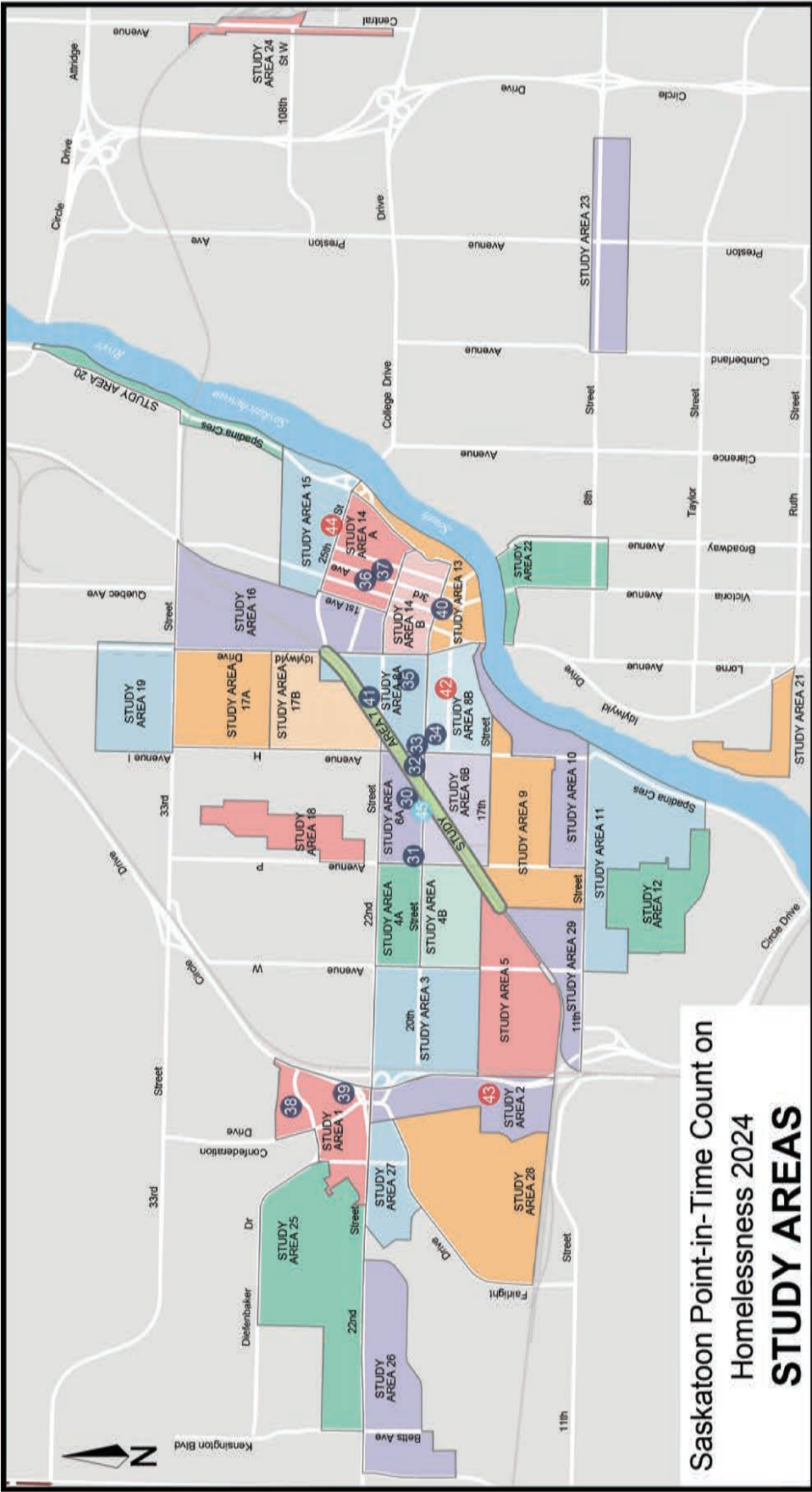
29 Transitional Housing

- Camponi Housing Corporation
- Crocus Co-operative
- CUMFI Transitional Homes - 5 locations
- EGADZ - 3 locations
- John Howard Society - 2 locations
- OUTSaskatoon
- Oxford House
- Persons Living with AIDS Network
- Prairie Harm Reduction
- Quint Development Corporation - 2 locations
- Sanctum Care Group - 2 locations
- Saskatoon Interval House
- Saskatoon Tribal Council - 2 locations
- STR8UP
- The Salvation Army - 2 locations
- YWCA - 3 locations

3 Systems

- Detox
- Hospital Data
- Police Holding Cells/Detention Unit

STUDY AREAS MAP



Unsheltered Stationary Locations

- 30 Dr Freda Ahenakew Library
- 31 Prairie Harm Reduction
- 32 The Bridge on 20th
- 33 CUMFI Bus at City Centre Church
- 34 Friendship Inn
- 35 Saskatoon Food Bank and Learning Centre
- 36 Bus Mail
- 37 Frances Morrison Library
- 219 Ave K S
- 1516 20th St W
- 1008 20th St W
- 720 20th St W
- 619 20th St W
- 202 Ave C S
- 226 23rd St E
- 311 23rd St E

Sheltered Stationary Locations

- 39 Carlyle King Library/Cosmo Civic Centre
- 39 South End of Confederation Mall Parking Lot / Superstore Parking Lot
- 40 "Lighthouse"
- 41 Persons Living with AIDS Network
- 3130 Laurier Dr
- 300 Confederation Dr
- 304 2nd Ave S
- 127 Ave D N
- 42 The Salvation Army
- 43 Emergency Wellness Centre
- 44 YWCA
- Headquarters
- 339 Ave C S
- 415 Fairmont Dr
- 510 25 St E
- 1120 20th St W

City of Saskatoon
Planning and Development

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May 2, 2025

