



2020 KAUA'I COUNTY POINT IN TIME COUNT TOPLINE REPORT

OVERVIEW

What is the Point in Time Count? A point-in-time (PIT) count provides an unduplicated snapshot of how many people experienced homelessness in a community on a given night, or a “point in time.” On the Neighbor Islands, there are three designated communities: Hawai‘i County, Maui County and Kauai County, who each conduct their counts independently. However, these three communities, and every community across the nation, inquiries about the same point in time, which, this year in our community, was January 26. The count includes both sheltered (living in congregate homeless shelters) and unsheltered (living on the streets or in areas unfit for human habitation) populations. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires that communities receiving federal funds from the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Grants program conduct an annual sheltered count during the last week of January and a biannual unsheltered count. However, in the interest of having the most current data, our community elected to conduct unsheltered counts annually.

Unsheltered counts are conducted by homeless outreach workers and volunteers, who canvas our community to count the people who appear to be living in places not meant for human habitation. This includes individuals and families living in parks, beaches, cars, and tents. This year, housing advocates and volunteers canvassed areas like these across Kaua`i, asking, “Where did you sleep on January 26th?” People experiencing sheltered homelessness (meaning they reside in a county-recognized homeless shelter) are counted through data collected from the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), which is the database used by homeless service providers to keep track of those who utilize services.

This annual count is one tool used to track progress, inform public opinion, increase public awareness, and attract resources to effectively address homelessness in our communities. The PIT Count helps communities plan services and programs to appropriately address local needs, measure progress in decreasing homelessness, and identify strengths and gaps in a community’s current homelessness assistance system. While the PIT Count should not be confused with service utilization reports, it does provide a one-night snapshot of homelessness experiences on Hawai`i Island, Maui, and Kaua`i. The collected data is compared county to county and year to year and

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provides benchmarks to help stakeholders understand homelessness in their respective communities.

Bridging the Gap (BTG), which represents Hawai'i County, Maui County and Kaua'i County, is the Neighbor Islands' Continuum of Care (CoC). A CoC consists of members who represent a variety of public and private agencies that work together to plan and promote a community-wide commitment to ending homelessness. Data collected in each county's Count is analyzed and aggregated to determine the total CoC results. The major findings of each jurisdiction's PIT Count are required and reported in its annual funding application to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

KAUA'I COUNTY STATISTICS AND TRENDS

Table 1 shows the five-year trend in sheltered, unsheltered, and total homelessness on Kaua'i. After undergoing a dramatic increase of the total homeless count in 2019 from the previous year, the County of Kaua'i has executed its 2020 PIT Count with considerably more oversight and planning. The county leadership is confident that the 2020 count is a more realistic and accurate representation of the extent of homelessness on the island.

Table 1: Kaua'i Summary, 2016-2020

	Sheltered		Unsheltered		Kaua'i Total
	#	%	#	%	#
2020	55	13.0%	369	87.0%	424
2019	95	21.4%	348	78.6%	443
2018	106	36.2%	187	63.8%	293
2017	115	27.9%	297	72.1%	412
2016	91	20.6%	351	79.4%	442

Table 2 presents the sheltered and unsheltered household configuration statistics for Kaua'i County.

Table 2: 2020 Kaua'i Household Configuration Summary

	Sheltered		Unsheltered		Kaua'i Total
	#	%	#	%	#
Individuals	33	10.9%	269	89.1%	302
Family Individuals	22	18.0%	100	82.0%	122
Adults	9	15.8%	48	84.2%	57
Children	13	20.0%	52	80.0%	65
All Individuals	55	13.0%	369	87.0%	424
Family Households	7	21.2%	26	78.8%	33

Kaua'i Homeless Subpopulations

Chronic Homelessness (CH)

Table 3: Kaua'i Chronically Homeless, 2020 (self-reported chronic homeless estimates)

	Emergency Shelter	Unsheltered	Total
CH Individuals	3	131	134
CH Families	1	2	3
Persons in CH Families	4	6	10

Veteran Homelessness

Table 4: Kaua'i Homeless Veterans, 2020 (sheltered and unsheltered homeless veteran data)

	Emergency	Transitional	Unsheltered	Total
Total Veterans	3	0	20	23
Veteran Families	0	0	0	0
Persons in Veteran Families	0	0	0	0

Regional Summary

Table 5: 2020 Regional Summary of Total Unsheltered Persons Experiencing Homelessness (specific to Kaua'i County regions identified for the PIT Count, see attached map)

Zone	Individuals		Family Individuals		All Individuals		Family Households	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
1: West	62	23.0%	53	53.0%	115	31.2%	13	50.0%
2: South	5	1.9%	0	0.0%	5	1.4%	0	0.0%
3: South Central	107	39.8%	32	32.0%	139	37.7%	9	34.6%
4: East	64	23.8%	6	6.0%	70	19.0%	2	7.7%
5: North	31	11.5%	9	9.0%	40	10.8%	2	7.7%
Total	269	100.0%	100	100.0%	369	100.0%	26	100.0%

1. Overall homelessness decreased by 4% (from 443 persons in 2019 to 424 in 2020).
 - a. Unsheltered homelessness realized a moderate increase of 6% (from 348 persons in 2019 to 369 in 2020).
 - b. Sheltered homelessness markedly declined by 42% (from 95 persons in 2019 to 55 in 2020).

2. Family homelessness increased by a slim margin of 3% (from 32 families in 2019 to 33 in 2020).
3. Chronic homelessness was reduced by 10% (from 161 individuals and individuals in households in 2019 to 144 in 2020).
4. Veteran homelessness dropped by 12% (from 26 veterans in 2019 to 23 in 2020).

COMMUNITY ACTIONS TO ADDRESSING HOMELESSNESS

Our State's economy is in a desperate descent sparked by the COVID-19 pandemic. The State's key economic engines, particularly the tourism and hospitality industries, as well as small businesses, have been severely impacted by closures and reduction of services. The domino effect is in full force across the State. Vital COVID 19 safety measures have been mandated, leading to layoffs or decreased hours for those who remain employed, resulting in the inability to pay for rents, mortgages, and necessities of everyday living.

While BTG's focus remains on housing the houseless, this unprecedented pandemic compels us to ramp up preventative measures for those without income, awaiting unemployment insurance benefits, and unable to make rent or pay their mortgages. Without intentional resources on this front, the resulting impact could exacerbate homelessness in our community. While State conversations are currently focused on potential budget cuts across the board and including social services, we implore State leadership to at a minimum, maintain current level of funding for outreach, emergency sheltering, rapid re-housing and housing first programs. At times when our State experienced reductions and budget cuts, homelessness in our State was at its worst.

BTG endorses the following actions to alleviate the extraordinary state of affairs presented by COVID-19:

1. EXPAND AND ENHANCE STREET OUTREACH

Individuals experiencing homelessness are at greater risk of exposure to a variety of infectious diseases including influenza and COVID-19. Street Outreach staff are often the only connection to high-risk persons living in encampments or places not meant for human habitation across the island. Health care professionals in partnership with Housing Navigators must be deployed as "Street Medicine Teams" to encampments to assess, treat and educate patients in need of medical assistance, and provide follow up evaluation and care as needed, delivering care directly to them in their own environment. It is the first essential step in achieving higher levels of medical, mental health, and social care and towards a pathway to securing housing and residential stability.

2. EXPAND HOMELESS PREVENTION & DIVERSION STRATEGIES

We must strengthen practices and increase system capacity to divert families from falling into homelessness. Homeless prevention resources are critical to assist households who may

continue to need assistance when federal and state moratoria on evictions are lifted to avoid families from falling into homelessness. With the sudden spike of unemployment and an unknown time period of economic recovery, many families recently laid off in our communities will need access to rent, mortgage and utility assistance including arrears, short term and medium-term rent assistance.

3. INCREASE RAPID RE-HOUSING (RRH) & RENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Rapid re-housing is an intervention designed to help individuals and families exit homelessness quickly and return to permanent housing by providing three core program activities including housing identification, time limited financial assistance and housing-based case management services. Due to the lack of affordable housing in our community, households in Hawaii need long term rent subsidies.

4. INCREASE PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING PROGRAMS

It is critical to prevent loss of housing among people who are living in permanent supportive housing or being served by rapid rehousing programs. For chronically homeless individuals (those with a disability and long history of homelessness), stable housing and supportive services is the foundation for stability. Permanent supportive housing programs are project-based, clustered, or scattered site permanent housing linked with supportive services that help residents maintain housing. This housing program is the right intervention for persons with the deepest needs where they may stay in this program indefinitely with temporary or long-term rental assistance and/or supportive services. This resource depleted by April 2020 in Maui and Hawaii Counties.

5. BUILD AND ACQUIRE AFFORDABLE HOUSING:

Hawai'i must continue to dedicate itself to increasing the supply of housing and creating new housing opportunities. BTG continues to prioritize movement to permanent housing, especially considering the COVID-19 pandemic. Without increasing affordable housing opportunities, the flow becomes stagnant and creates a bottleneck at the shelters.