



2024 KAUA'I COUNTY POINT IN TIME COUNT TOPLINE REPORT

OVERVIEW

Every January, counties across the nation carry out the Homeless Point In Time (PIT) Count in their respective jurisdictions. The PIT Count is an annual survey of people experiencing homelessness on a given night.

Bridging the Gap (BTG), which represents Hawai'i County, Maui County and Kaua'i County, is the Neighbor Island's Continuum of Care (CoC). As the Hawai'i balance-of-state CoC, BTG serves as a local planning body designed to promote a community-wide commitment to end homelessness. In response to BTG's responsibility and dedication to achieve this goal, autonomous PIT Counts are conducted in each county. Data is then analyzed and aggregated for total rural county results. The major findings of the jurisdiction's PIT Count are required and reported in the annual funding application to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

This year, teams on Kaua'i canvassed parks, beaches, and many other areas, asking people "Where did you sleep on January 22nd?" This federally mandated survey seeks to count anyone who slept on the street, in a car, or in other areas not meant for human habitation. Sheltered homeless are counted through data collected from the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) for January 22nd. While the PIT Count does not capture every person experiencing homelessness, it does provide a one-night snapshot of homelessness on Kaua'i. The collected data is compared county to county and year to year to help stakeholders understand homelessness in their districts.

KAUA'I COUNTY STATISTICS AND TRENDS

Table 1 summarizes the total number of sheltered and unsheltered homeless for Kaua'i over the last five years. An unsheltered count was not conducted in 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The table presents sheltered, unsheltered, and total homelessness each year. Individual and family homelessness is broken out within each component to detail differences from year to year between these key population groups.

Table 1: Kaua'i Sheltered and Unsheltered Summary, 2020-2024

	Sheltered		Unsheltered		Total Sheltered & Unsheltered on Kaua'i
	#	%	#	%	
2024	59	11%	464	89%	523
2023	58	12%	430	88%	488
2022	40	9%	404	91%	444
2021	63	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2020	55	13%	369	87%	424

The number of sheltered homeless individuals rose by 1 to 59 people this year. Unsheltered homelessness also increased by 34 to 464 people compared to 430 last year, reflecting an 8% increase. The total number of sheltered and unsheltered homeless individuals increased by 35 people totaling 523 people this year, reflecting a 7% increase.

Table 2: 2024 Kaua'i Sheltered and Unsheltered Family Configuration Summary

	Sheltered		Unsheltered		Total Sheltered & Unsheltered on Kaua'i
	#	%	#	%	
Single Individuals	21	5%	370	95%	391
Family Individuals	38	29%	94	71%	132
Adults	18	31%	40	69%	58
Children	20	28%	54	72%	74
All Individuals	59	11%	464	89%	523
Family Households	11	33%	22	67%	33

Unsheltered homelessness among single individuals rose to 370 this year, an increase of 36 from last year's count. The number of unsheltered family households decreased by 5% to 22 households this year.

Kaua'i Homeless Subpopulations

Table 3: Kaua'i Sheltered and Unsheltered Veteran Summary, 2019-2024

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Emergency Shelter					
Veterans	3	4	4	0	3
Veteran Families	0	0	0	0	0
Veteran Family Individuals	0	0	0	0	0
Transitional Housing					
Veterans	0	0	0	0	0
Veteran Families	0	0	0	0	0
Veteran Family Individuals	0	0	0	0	0
Unsheltered					
Veterans	20	N/A	33	19	18
Veteran Families	0	N/A	1	0	0
Veteran Family Individuals	0	N/A	3	0	0

This table shows a reduction in the unsheltered subpopulation and an increase in the emergency sheltered subpopulation of homeless veterans that self-identified. The sheltered statistics are segregated by emergency and transitional project types.

Table 4: Kaua'i Sheltered and Unsheltered Configuration of Serious Mental Illness and Chronic Substance Use, 2019-2023

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Emergency Shelter					
Serious Mental Illness	7	9	3	1	5
Chronic Substance Use	5	8	4	4	5
Transitional Housing					
Serious Mental Illness	4	1	0	1	0
Chronic Substance Use	10	6	0	2	1
Unsheltered					
Serious Mental Illness	82	N/A	97	119	118
Chronic Substance Use	87	N/A	75	96	99
Total by Subpopulation					
Serious Mental Illness	93	N/A	100	121	123
Chronic Substance Use	102	N/A	79	102	105

Kaua'i continues to collect data on the subpopulation above. These statistics, based on adults surveyed, reveal a steady increase in serious mental illness and chronic substance use among the groups total over the past five years.

This growing aspect provides additional strain among homeless service providers. Mental illness and substance use supports are limited and require specific and focused attention. Currently, the

weight of these issues often falls upon street outreach providers to navigate. The expansion of specialized outreach to include mental health services, substance use support, and intensive case management is acutely needed.

Regional Summary

Table 5: Kaua'i Unsheltered Individuals and Families by Zone, 2019-2024.

An unsheltered count was not conducted in 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

	2019	2020	2022	2023	2024
Individuals	286	269	357	334	370
1: West	75	62	61	68	69
2: South	2	5	17	21	12
3: South Central	118	107	122	113	146
4: East	41	64	122	104	107
5: North	50	31	35	28	36
Family Individuals	62	100	47	96	94
1: West	27	53	13	20	26
2: South	2	0	0	9	8
3: South Central	20	32	17	22	31
4: East	3	6	9	30	23
5: North	10	9	8	15	6
All Individuals	348	369	404	430	464
1: West	102	115	74	88	95
2: South	4	5	17	30	20
3: South Central	138	139	139	135	177
4: East	44	70	131	134	130
5: North	60	40	43	43	42

Kaua'i’s five regions show both increases and decreases across the island. Overall totals within the regions portray an increase of 49 in the West and South-Central regions combined. We saw a collective decrease of 15 in the South, East and North regions. Individual homelessness is broken down in this table and presents single individuals and family individuals in each region over the past five years for comparison. Although there was a slight decrease in the number of family individuals from last year there was a significant increase of 36 single individuals from 2023 to 2024.

COMMUNITY ACTIONS TO ADDRESSING HOMELESSNESS

While BTG’s focus remains on housing the houseless, we are compelled to expand and increase our preventative measures. Without intentional resources on this front, the resulting impact could exacerbate homelessness in our community.

BTG endorses the following actions:

1. BUILD, ACQUIRE, AND EXPAND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Hawai'i must continue to dedicate itself to increasing the supply of housing and creating new housing opportunities. We will continue to advocate for the prioritization of funding to support an increase in permanent housing. Without increasing affordable housing opportunities, the flow becomes stagnant and creates a longer length of homelessness.

In 2023, the County of Kaua'i and other developers broke ground on over 400 units of various types including workforce rental apartments, senior housing, and single-family homes. Kaua'i's Ohana Zone supportive housing project, Kealaula on Pua Loke, provides 28 rental units. This year, a 32-unit replica will open in the Lima Ola subdivision in 'Ele'ele on the west side of the island. Similar to Pua Loke, this project will include on-site case management through a local non-profit organization, as well as provide housing for currently homeless households with a priority for families with minor children and kupuna. The Lima Ola supportive housing project has dedicated 20 units for homeless individuals through the CoC's Coordinated Entry System (CES).

The Kaua'i Community Alliance (KCA) continues to work with developers and management companies to increase dedicated units for families and individuals experiencing homelessness through the CoC's CES.

KCA will continue to support these projects and advocate for prioritization of funding.

2. INCREASE PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING PROGRAMS

It is critical to prevent the loss of housing among people who are living in permanent supportive housing (PSH). For chronically homeless individuals (those with a disability and long history of homelessness), stable housing and supportive services are the foundation for stability. Permanent supportive housing programs are project-based, clustered, or scattered site permanent housing linked with supportive services that help residents sustain housing. This housing program is the appropriate intervention for persons with the greatest needs where they may remain in this program indefinitely with temporary or long-term rental assistance, intense housing case management and supportive services.

It is essential to expand the supply of housing and to strengthen practices to educate housing providers that program participants will have deep needs. Needs are met with weekly meetings that may be combined with face-to-face meetings and phone calls. Early intervention, trust building, and communication are critical factors in keeping residents housed.

Kaua'i has one permanent supportive housing project that can service 10 chronically homeless individuals. Although Kaua'i has the smallest representation of PSH beds of the three counties that make up BTG, our need is growing.

Enhancements for PSH should include reviewing the existing permanent supportive housing program relative to their contractual service expectations, filling existing gaps, providing support, and expanding permanent supportive housing funding for additional bed spaces.

3. EXPAND RAPID RE-HOUSING (RRH) & LONG-TERM RENT SUBSIDY PROGRAMS

Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) 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. Kaua'i's current RRH programs provide homeless individuals with these services for a sustainable and secure future in housing. RRH programs utilizing the HMIS are assigned clients to house through the Coordinated Entry System (CES).

The continuity of Kaua'i's CES and alignment with the BTG CES policies and procedures must be maintained to continue providing a well-coordinated and efficient community system that assures homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

In 2021, the U.S Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) released two hundred fourteen (214) new Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHV) on the neighbor islands. It is critical for these types of long-term rent subsidies to continue along with an increase in affordable rental housing units. Twenty-eight (28) EHV were allocated to the Kaua'i County Housing Agency. These vouchers were referred from the CES system homeless and recently homeless households. Local non-profit agencies assisted clients with applications, housing search, and provided ongoing housing-based case management services.

4. EXPAND HOMELESS PREVENTION & DIVERSION STRATEGIES

We must strengthen practices and increase system capacity to prevent families from entering homelessness. Homeless prevention resources are critical to assist households who may need assistance. In our current state of economic recovery, many households on Kaua'i continue to need access to rent and utility assistance including arrears, and short-term and medium-term rent assistance. Other issues contributing to housing displacement include, but are not limited to, Hawaii's high cost of living (rent, food, gas and more), an overall shortage of housing, rentals going off market due to sales, and landlords not accepting housing assistance and subsidy programs. In many cases, the increase in supply prices and disruption of supply chains has delayed new construction.

5. EXPAND AND ENHANCE STREET OUTREACH

Outreach service providers on Kaua'i are increasing their efforts to reach and provide direct contact with individuals and families experiencing homelessness. Given the volume of unsheltered homeless found this year and the state and federal initiatives to reduce unsheltered homelessness, outreach services can be enhanced by reviewing existing street outreach programs relative to their service contractual expectations, filling gaps in outreach service delivery and expanding street outreach funding to deliver more of the housing-focused outreach services that are needed.

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. 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. Individuals experiencing homelessness are at greater risk of exposure to a variety of infectious diseases. Further funding is needed to increase street medicine and wound care for the homeless community of Kaua'i.

Data from the last five years shows an increasing need for mental health services and substance abuse support amongst the unsheltered population. These challenges are nuanced and require specific and focused attention. Currently, the weight of these issues often falls upon street outreach providers to navigate. Specialized outreach providing mental health case management and substance use support is essential.

Local CoC Kaua'i Community Alliance (KCA) hosts a monthly outreach meeting with providers to communicate general updates, new encampments, upcoming cleanups, and partnerships. Upwards of 6 organizations do consistent daily, weekly, and monthly outreach providing the following: vital documents, youth services, wound care, hot showers, health services, substance misuse treatment, tobacco cessation, HIV testing, bus passes, pet support, and sign-up for assistance programs.