

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
MEDIA CONTACT
Alan Villatuya, 831-454-4706
Alan.Villatuya@santacruzcounty.us



Preliminary 2024 Point-In-Time Count

Reveals Sustained Progress and Areas of Concern

Preliminary results from the 2024 Point-In-Time (PIT) Count show Santa Cruz County was able to maintain progress from the 2023 PIT Count in reducing the impacts of homelessness on individuals and the community.

The annual PIT Count is an estimate of the number of people experiencing homelessness on a single day and offers valuable insights into the current state of homelessness within Santa Cruz County. The overall number of people experiencing homelessness remained essentially unchanged between 2023 and 2024, with a slight 2.6 percent increase to 1,850.

The relatively similar numbers between the two years indicate local investments and strategies, including the Housing for a Healthy Santa Cruz County framework, are contributing to sustainable drops in homelessness.

“Last year’s numbers were the lowest ever recorded in Santa Cruz County, so it was gratifying to see that work validated in this year’s count,” Housing for Health Director Robert Ratner said. “However, we have a long way to go before we can claim success, and there are many challenges ahead including the anticipated loss of critical State funding.”

Preliminary data highlights areas of progress and challenges with specific populations. Proposed cuts to State funding in the areas of housing and homelessness will make it difficult to sustain local progress in future years.

Key takeaways from 2024 preliminary PIT Count numbers include:

- The number of families experiencing homelessness declined from 76 to 52, with only 4 unsheltered families identified.
- Youth, 18 – 24 year-olds, without children in their household declined 40%, from 334 to 199.
- There was a 5% reduction in homelessness among children under 18.
- There was a 55% decline in the number of veterans experiencing homelessness, from 159 to 72.

Federal, State, and local prioritized investments, policies, programs, and housing resources for families, youth, and veterans contribute to the progress seen by these populations. However, a lack of similar focused commitments with other groups contributed to increased levels of homelessness.

- There was a 7% increase in homelessness among seniors, those aged 55 and over, mirroring national and statewide trends.
- The number of people with disabilities experiencing a year or more of homelessness increased 19% from 573 to 710.
- The number of people reporting severe mental illness increased by 5%, while those reporting long-term substance use disorders increased by 32%.

Conducted at the end of January 2024, the PIT Count undercounts the total number of people experiencing homelessness throughout the year and excludes those who are in institutions and other populations, including those staying with family or friends. However, consistent methodologies allow useful year-to-year comparisons over time within a given geographic area.

The final PIT Count report is expected to be released by the end of July. The full report will provide a more comprehensive analysis and serve as a foundation for informed decision-making and targeted interventions in our ongoing efforts to ensure all County residents have a stable, safe, and healthy place to live. Visit the [Housing for Health Partnership website](#) to view the previous year's results.

The Housing for Health Partnership remains committed to working collaboratively with our community partners to establish sustainable solutions and healthy living situations for all County residents.

ATTACHMENTS:

- 2024 Preliminary Point In Time (PIT) Count Data on Persons Experiencing Homelessness
- HUD 2023 Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance Programs Homeless Populations and Subpopulations

ABOUT THE HOUSING FOR HEALTH PARTNERSHIP

The Housing for Health Partnership is a collaboration of the County and each city within Santa Cruz County, along with local homelessness service providers. It acts as the federally-designated continuum of care for Santa Cruz County and helps allocate State and federal funding to address homelessness. The County of Santa Cruz serves as lead agency for the H4H Partnership.

For more information, visit our [website](#), [FaceBook page](#), and [Instagram account](#).