

Hartford Continuum of Care

2014
POINT-IN-TIME
COUNT
Initial Publication



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Introduction

Since 2005, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has required applicants for federal homeless assistance grants to count and report the number of people experiencing homelessness in their communities on one night during the last week of January. Homeless Point in Time Counts across the country are used as a primary data source informing federal funding towards services to end homelessness and track progress against established goals.

The Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness (CCEH) has led communities across the state in an annual homelessness count (CT PIT) since 2007, mobilizing non-profits, local and state government agencies, and hundreds of concerned citizens from every community to gather critical data in order to inform efforts to prevent and end homelessness.

HUD mandates that communities count the number of people who are homeless, but not in emergency shelters or transitional housing facilities, every two years. Since the last “unsheltered count” occurred in 2013, the CT PIT 2014 only counted people in programs.

This year, Hartford saw the largest decrease in the number of homeless veterans - almost 43% from 2013 and 68% since 2009.

Community Context

Growing rates of un- and underemployment are the biggest barriers to obtaining and maintaining housing. During the 2013 calendar year, the average unemployment rate in Hartford was 14.7%, compared to the statewide average of 7.8% and a nationwide average of 7.4%. Even at such a rate, Hartford is experiencing one of its lowest points of unemployment since 2009. In complement to a higher rate of unemployment than the state average, Hartford’s poverty rate is higher than the state average. In the past 12 months, 40% of all Hartford families and 45% of all children were below the poverty level. Statewide, these levels were 11% and 13%, respectively.

In order to determine the appropriate costs for housing, the Department of Housing and Urban Development uses an estimate known as “fair market rent” (FMR). The FMR is determined by combining the shelter rent plus the cost of all tenant-paid utilities, except telephones, cable or satellite television service, and internet service. In Connecticut, the Fair Market Rent for a two-bedroom apartment is \$1,197. In order to afford this rate without paying more than 30% of total income towards housing, a household must earn \$3,991 monthly or \$47,890 annually. If making an hourly wage, an individual working 40 hours a week, 52 weeks a year must earn \$23.02 an hour to comfortably afford a two bedroom apartment, while the current minimum wage in Connecticut is just \$8.70 an hour.

While Hartford’s housing prices are slightly lower than the state average, it remains unaffordable for low-wage earners. The median income in Hartford is \$85,700 while the Fair Market Rent for a two-bedroom apartment is \$1,170. Spending no more than 30% on housing, the average renter could spend no more than \$643 a month. In order to afford this rate, a worker would need to earn an hourly wage of \$22.50, which is equivalent to 2.6 full-time minimum wage jobs.

CT PIT 2014 Results

Total Numbers

Across the state, emergency shelters have been operating at or near maximum capacity for the past few years. During federal fiscal year 2013 alone, Connecticut's homeless shelters and transitional housing programs served over 13,663 people, including 1,343 families and 2,427 children. Throughout 2013 Hartford's emergency shelters and transitional housing programs served 3,266 people, or approximately 24% of all homeless statewide.

During the CT PIT 2014 count of emergency shelters and transitional housing, Hartford was found to have the largest proportion of homeless in the state, outside of the Balance of State (BoS) with 730 people counted, or 20% of the 3,571 homeless statewide. A majority of these (74%, or 542 people) were single adults not in families (see Table 1). While the city had a large proportion of adults, Hartford had a smaller proportion of children than state averages, with 15% of homeless children in the region, compared to 22% statewide.

Table 1. Total Persons Counted in Emergency Shelter and Transitional Housing in Hartford

Population	Number Counted, Hartford	Percent of Total Homeless in Hartford	Percent of All Homeless in Connecticut*
Adults in Families	77	11%	15%
Children in Families	111	15%	14%
Single Adult	542	74%	24%
Unaccompanied Children Under 18	0	0%	0%
Total Persons	730	100%	20%

*These percents are based off the number in the leftmost column divided by the state total for that category. For example, for adults in programs $77/513$ (total adults in families statewide) = 15%. For detailed state data, please refer to the Appendix of the *Statewide 2014 Point-in-Time Count Initial Publication*.

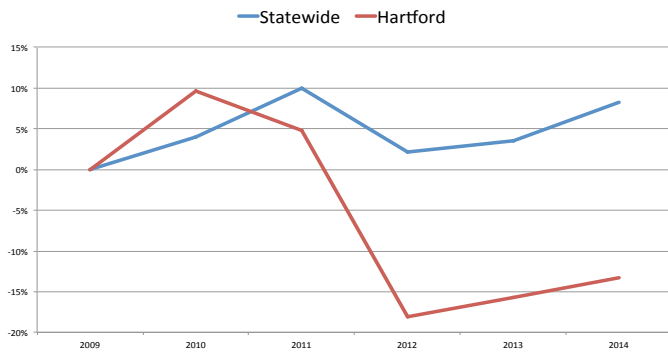
The total number of single adults counted in Hartford alone represented 24% of all homeless adults counted statewide. This region also saw the highest percentage of homeless families in the state outside of BoS; 16% of all homeless families statewide were sheltered in Hartford on the night of the count.

Since CT PIT 2009, Hartford has seen a more substantial decrease in total emergency shelter and transitional housing clients than other regions in the state. Since 2009, the number of these homeless declined by 20%, with the number of homeless adults falling 16%, and children 35%. While the overall counts of the homeless population during CT PIT have fallen statewide, it has been much more gradual, about 4% since 2009.

Adults and Children in Families

The Department of Housing and Urban Development defines a family as “a household composed of two or more related persons, at least one of whom is a child accompanied by an adult or a juvenile parent.” In Hartford, 26% of all persons experiencing homelessness on the night of CT PIT 2014 were people in families with children. Of the 458 families counted statewide in emergency shelter or transitional housing programs, Hartford sheltered 72, or 16% of all families in the state.

Figure 1. Percent Change of Families in Programs in Hartford and Statewide



Within these 72 families, there were 77 adults and 111 children. Proportionally, these adults and children make up 15% of all adults and 14% of all children in families in programs statewide on the night of CT PIT 2014.

Even considering its relatively larger population, Hartford has seen a lower proportion of family homelessness than other regions and has overall experienced greater progress alleviating family homelessness, with a 13% decrease in families between 2009 and 2014, compared to an 8% increase statewide (see Table 2).

Corresponding to the decrease in the number of families, the number of people in families has fallen as well. Since 2009 there are 30% fewer people in families, with 22% fewer adults and 35% fewer children.

Table 2. Breakdown of Families in Hartford

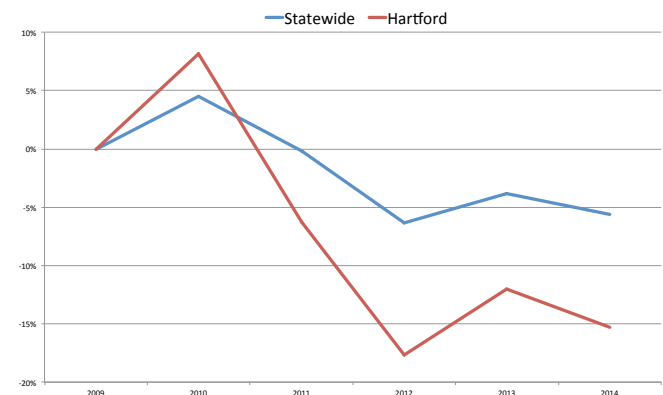
Year	Number of Families	Percent of all Families	Number of Adults	Number of Children	Total People in Families
2009	83	20%	99	171	270
2010	91	21%	101	167	268
2011	87	19%	97	167	264
2012	68	16%	79	140	219
2013	70	16%	76	122	198
2014	72	16%	77	111	188

Single Adults

In Hartford and across the state, homelessness is much more common in single adults than among families. Single adults in emergency shelter and transitional housing programs represented 74% of all Hartford’s homeless on the night of CT PIT 2014 (see Table 1). The 542 single adults in Hartford represent almost 24% of all homeless adults statewide in Connecticut’s emergency shelter and transitional housing programs.

Like the improvements in family homelessness, Hartford’s reduction in homelessness among single adults was greater than the state average. Compared to a statewide decrease of almost 6% since 2009, Hartford has seen a 15% decrease in single adults over the same period (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Percent Change of Single Adults in Programs in Hartford and Statewide

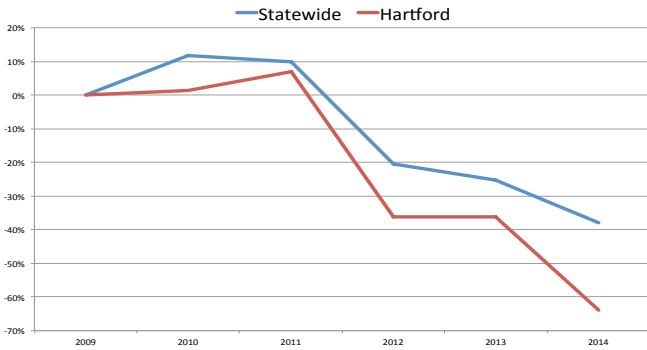


Homeless Veterans

During CT PIT 2014, Hartford counted 26 homeless veterans, including two females. These 26 veterans comprised 4% of all adults in Hartford, and 12% of all veterans statewide.

Thanks in part to a national commitment to end veteran homelessness, there has recently been a marked decrease statewide in the number of homeless veterans in emergency shelter and transitional housing.

Figure 3. Percent Change of Veterans in Programs in Hartford and Statewide



When compared to other regions in the state, Hartford has consistently been more successful in reducing veteran homelessness. In 2014, there were 71% fewer homeless veterans counted in emergency shelters and transitional housing than in 2009, and a 43% decrease since 2013 (see Figure 3).

Comparatively, veteran homelessness fell statewide by 38% since 2009, with a 17% decrease since 2013.

Chronically Homeless

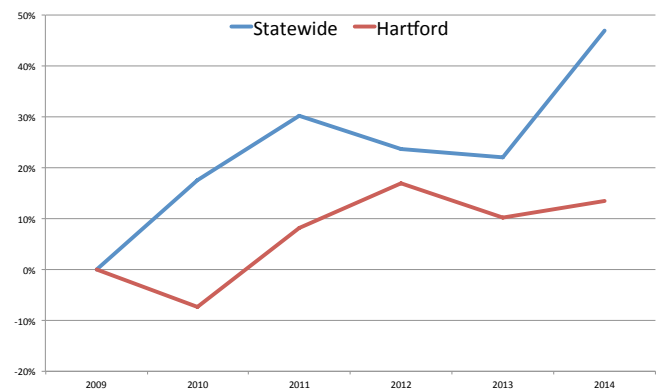
As defined by HUD, a chronically homeless person or family is an unaccompanied homeless individual with a disabling condition, or a family with at least one adult member who has a disabling condition, which person has either been continuously homeless for a year or more OR has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years. The term homeless in this case means a person sleeping in an emergency homeless shelter or safe haven, or in a place not meant for human habitation, e.g., living on the streets.

In Hartford, there were 168 chronically homeless adults counted in emergency shelter during CT PIT 2014, which is nearly a quarter (24%) of all chronically homeless statewide.

All of the chronically homeless adults counted in Hartford were singles, and not in families with children. There have only been 3 total chronically homeless families counted in Hartford since they were first recorded for CT PIT in 2011; last year one counted, which was 2% of the chronically homeless family population statewide.

While chronic homelessness has increased in Hartford by 14% since 2009, the state's chronically homeless increased by over three times that - almost 47% since 2009 (see Figure 4).

Figure 4. Percent Change of Chronically Homeless Adults in Programs



Consistent with the rest of the nation, Connecticut is continually improving our data collection practices around counting the chronically homeless. Based on national best practices Connecticut is refining the methods and questions asked to make the chronic determination leading to a more accurate and representative count. With this we expect the chronic homeless numbers to come more in line with the national average of about 15%.

Health and Safety

There are a few common service needs shared by a large proportion of homeless individuals. Targeting individuals with specific health needs can greatly benefit both the state and individual in need of care. Targeting and housing these individuals with programs like rapid rehousing and permanent supportive housing allows individuals to focus on their care, rather than where they are going to sleep. When individuals can devote their energy to maintaining or improving their health, it shifts the burden away from expensive emergency medical services.

CT PIT 2014 revealed that Hartford has a slightly higher proportion of adults reporting problems with substance abuse, with 342 people, or 55% of Hartford's adult population confirming a substance abuse concern (see Table 3) compared to almost 52% statewide.

Table 3. Adults with Health and Safety Concerns, Hartford

Year	Substance Abuse		Mental Illness		Domestic Violence		HIV/AIDS	
	Number of Adults	% of all Adults	Number of Adults	% of all Adults	Number of Adults	% of all Adults	Number of Adults	% of all Adults
2009	368	52%	235	32%	45	6%	98	13%
2010	411	43%	333	35%	127	13%	94	10%
2011	403	58%	260	37%	90	13%	88	13%
2012	318	52%	268	44%	68	11%	19	3%
2013	366	57%	202	32%	65	10%	17	3%
2014	342	55%	216	35%	42	7%	22	4%

Those reporting some kind of mental illness comprised 35% of Hartford's homeless, a bit lower than the 42% of adults statewide reporting a mental illness. Unfortunately, the proportion of adults with substance abuse has increased and mental illness has remained relatively constant since 2009, with a 3% increase in proportion for both categories.

Compared to all other communities across the state, Hartford reported the lowest proportion of people reporting domestic violence as contributing to their homelessness. There were 42 adults who cited domestic violence as contributing to their homelessness, which is 7% of the adult population (see Table 3). Comparatively, 14% of adults statewide reported that domestic violence was a major contributor to their homelessness. The 3% drop in domestic violence could be attributed to methodology changes. Calculations were changed so as to better estimate the survivors of domestic violence, and to exclude perpetrators.

Persons self-reporting a diagnosis of HIV/AIDS have historically been the smallest homeless subpopulation, and this trend continues into 2014. Twenty-two (4%) adults in Hartford reported a diagnosis of HIV/AIDS, which is 1% above the state average (see Table 3).

There were no unaccompanied children under 18 recorded in Hartford during CT PIT 2014.

Limitations

Although the point-in-time count provides useful data about homelessness in Connecticut like all surveys, it has certain limitations.

- **Point-in-Time data:** Point-in-time counts generally under-represent the levels of homelessness. The purpose of a point-in-time count is to measure the minimum number of homeless people on a typical night in Connecticut. Since it is a survey of a single night, people who experience homelessness for long periods of time are overrepresented while those who experience homelessness for shorter periods of time are underrepresented.
- **Timing:** Since the count is conducted in January, the number of people utilizing emergency shelter is higher than if the count was conducted during warmer months. Variable weather conditions such as snow, rain, or extreme cold can further affect the population. The weather surrounding this count was particularly bad, potentially increasing the sheltered count in 2014.
- **Definition of “homeless”:** HUD’s definition of “homeless” does not include those who are “precariously housed.” Individuals in these housing situations are typically staying with friends or relatives, in a hotel, substandard or overcrowded housing, treatment facility, jail, or paying disproportionate amounts of their income towards housing.
- **Shelter limitations:** The number of sheltered homeless in one location is largely dependent on the number of available beds in the region. Increases and decreases in certain regions may be the result of the introduction or removal of shelters or programs.
- **Biennial Unsheltered Count:** The unsheltered count takes place every other year. When unsheltered counts are not conducted, the unsheltered count numbers from the previous year are used to determine our sheltered and unsheltered count. However, the purpose of this document was to publish initial data collected on PIT night. Since the unsheltered count was performed last year, these data (current and historical) are *sheltered numbers only*.
- **Self-reported data:** PIT survey results come exclusively from data reported by clients. Therefore, it is possible that some clients provide erroneous responses.
- **Survey question changes:** Changes in the survey can affect the number of responses in certain categories, so discretion should be used interpreting trends. For example, changes in questions regarding severe mental illness were much more broad in previous years.