

Sacramento Homeless Count 2011

Summary Results, Methodology, & Technical Report

Addendum

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by

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Addendum: Demographic Findings

The Sacramento Homeless Count 2011 Summary Results, Methodology, & Technical Report was published in April 2011 and included information about the number of homeless people, sheltered and unsheltered, in Sacramento County and certain information about homeless subpopulations required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Focus Strategies, an affiliate of MKS Consulting, conducted additional analysis on collected demographic information at the request of community members and with the permission of Sacramento County Department of Human Assistance. We are pleased to present this supplemental information to help inform Sacramento about the demographics of the homeless population including age and race frequencies, as well as self-reported rates of food stamp application.

Tables 1 through 3 provide demographic data on age and race of unsheltered homeless persons counted in 2011, and compare these findings with data from the 2009 Point-in-Time Count. Table 4 provides data on respondents applying for food stamps. All tables *refer only to unsheltered homeless people* because in 2009 and 2011, only adults and unaccompanied youth observed on the streets/outside during the count completed an interview.¹ Sheltered homeless people were not interviewed.

Age

The average age of unsheltered homeless adults increase from 43.3 years in 2009 to 44.8 years in 2011, an increase of 1.5 years or 3.5%. The median age increased by 3 years (or 7%) from 43 to 46 years. The mode² age increased by 6 years or 14% from 43 to 49 years. The data indicate the population of homeless adults may be getting slightly older, consistent with national findings regarding the aging of the homeless population. The range of ages reported in 2009 was 18 to 71 years, while in 2011 ages ranged from 16 to 86 years.

¹ In both 2009 and 2011, interviewers were instructed to approach everyone on the streets regardless of age unless they were a child accompanied by an adult. In limited cases, youth under 18 will be interviewed (if the person is unaccompanied or with other youths). Such youth are considered effectively emancipated because they are not with legal guardians; this strategy ensures that some youth sleeping outside are counted. In 2011, two 16-year olds were interviewed, while in 2009 no one under 18 was interviewed.

² The mode represents the response selected by the greatest number of respondents.

Table 1: Age Statistics 2009 and 2011

| Age Statistics (years) | 2009 | 2011 | # Change | % Change |
|-------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Mean | 43.3 | 44.8 | 1.5 | 3.5% |
| Median | 43 | 46 | 3 | 7.0% |
| Mode | 43 | 49 | 6 | 14.0% |
| Minimum | 18 | 16 | N/A | N/A |
| Maximum | 71 | 86 | N/A | N/A |

The proportion of homeless adults between the ages of 18-24 increased slightly from 4.8% in 2009 to 5.5% in 2011, a difference of 0.7%, which was the smallest change among the age categories. The largest change occurred in the age category of 25-59. In 2009, 25-59 year olds made up 90.3% of the adult unsheltered homeless population, while in 2011 that proportion decreased to 84.1%, a difference of -6.2% (proportionally the largest change in any age category.) The final age category of 60+ experienced an increase as well. In 2009, 60+ year olds comprised 4.8% of the adult unsheltered homeless population, while in 2011, this group included 10.4% of the population, a difference of 5.6%.

Table 2: Age Groups 2009 and 2011

| Age Groups | 2009 | % of total | 2011 | % of total | % Difference |
|-------------------|-------------|-------------------|-------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| 16-24 | 57 | 4.8% | 53 | 5.5% | 0.7% |
| 25-59 | 1078 | 90.3% | 803 | 84.1% | -6.2% |
| 60+ | 57 | 4.8% | 99 | 10.4% | 5.6% |
| Total | 1194 | 100.0% | 955 | 100.0% | 0.0% |

Race

The largest proportional decrease occurred in the American Indian or Alaskan Native population, from 19.3% in 2009 to 4.8% in 2011, a difference of -14.4%. The next largest proportional decrease occurred in the African American population, from 26.6% in 2009 to 22.4% in 2011, a difference of -4.2%. Most of this change appears to be explained by the inclusion of a category “multiple races” which was not used in 2009. Just over 18% of the 2011 population were recorded as “multiple races.” All other race categories changed by less than 1%.

Table 3: Race

| <u>Race</u> | 2009 | % of total | 2011 | % of total | % Difference |
|--|-------------|-------------------|-------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| Caucasian | 455 | 38.1% | 372 | 39.0% | 0.9% |
| African American | 318 | 26.6% | 214 | 22.4% | -4.2% |
| Multiple Races* | --* | --* | 175 | 18.3% | --* |
| Hispanic/Latino/Mexican | 113 | 9.4% | 89 | 9.3% | -0.1% |
| American Indian or Alaskan Native | 230 | 19.3% | 46 | 4.8% | -14.4% |
| Asian | 24 | 2.0% | 20 | 2.1% | 0.0% |
| Other Pacific Islander | 10 | 0.8% | 13 | 1.4% | 0.6% |
| Native Hawaiian | 10 | 0.8% | 3 | 0.3% | -0.5% |
| Other | 29 | 2.5% | 16 | 1.7% | -0.7% |
| Refused | 5 | 0.4% | 7 | 0.7% | 0.3% |
| Total | 1194 | 100.0% | 955 | 100.0% | 0.0% |

*In 2009, data on "multiple races" was not collected.

Food Stamps

In 2011 a question related to food stamps was added to the survey tool. The question asked if the respondent had applied for food stamps at some time in the past and answer choices covered different time periods. The purpose in asking about food stamp applications was to provide Sacramento County Department of Human Assistance with some indication of whether food stamp outreach efforts have been successful.

Nearly eighty percent of respondents reported they had applied for food stamps at some time in the past. 21% had applied in the past three months; about 13% had applied seven to twelve months ago and nearly 11% four to six months ago. Close to one-third (32.5%) of respondents had applied for food stamps more than one year ago. Respondents were not asked whether they had been approved or whether they continued to receive them.

Table 4: Food Stamps (2011 only)

| <u>Applied for Food Stamps in the Past ...</u> | 2011 | % of Total |
|---|-------------|-------------------|
| Three (3) Months | 200 | 21.0% |
| Four to Six (4-6) Months | 104 | 10.8% |
| Seven to Twelve (7-12) Months | 127 | 13.3% |
| More than One Year Ago | 311 | 32.5% |
| Never | 197 | 20.6% |
| Don't Know | 17 | 1.7% |
| Total | 955 | 100.0% |

Focus Strategies assists communities and organizations to reduce and end homelessness through systems of care analysis, planning, and policy and data analysis. Research and analysis areas of expertise include systems evaluation; HMIS technical assistance and homeless counts; and HEARTH preparation.

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