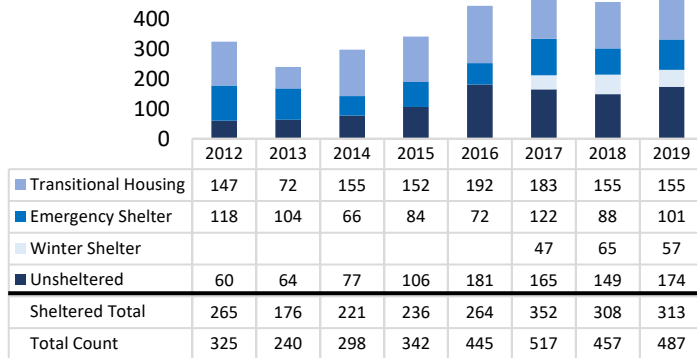# 2019 Kitsap County Point in Time Count Overview – *Preliminary Data*

The "Point in Time" count is an annual survey that gathers information about people experiencing homelessness during a 24-hour period at the end of January. This survey provides critical information regarding the scope and nature of homelessness in our community and can impact funding for homeless housing and services. Because participating in the survey is voluntary, and relies on volunteers finding people experiencing homelessness, it is considered to be an under count of the actual number of homeless. Participants are surveyed in a number of locations throughout the county including the Project Connect Resource Fairs[1], food banks/meal sites, in encampments, and on the streets.
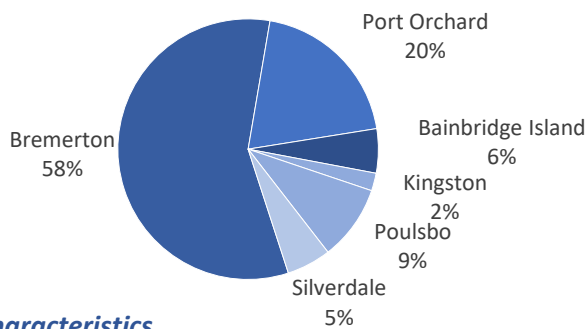
Increasing Numbers of Unsheltered Individuals

The 2019 count of 174 unsheltered individuals indicates a 17% increase from 2018 and a 5% increase from the average of 165 individuals over the prior 3 years. Since the opening of the Winter Shelter, the number of sheltered individuals has increased 19% from 264 in January 2016 to 313 in January 2019.

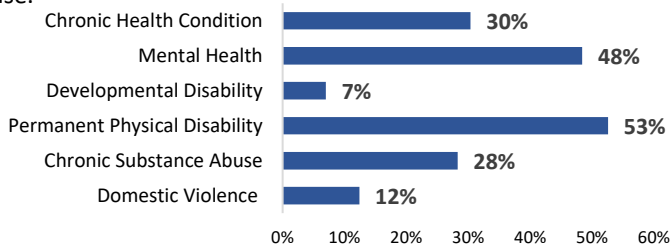|	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Transitional Housing	147	72	155	152	192	183	155	155
Emergency Shelter	118	104	66	84	72	122	88	101
Winter Shelter						47	65	57
Unsheltered	60	64	77	106	181	165	149	174
Sheltered Total	265	176	221	236	264	352	308	313
Total Count	325	240	298	342	445	517	457	487

Current City

Increased efforts were made to expand the count in 2019 throughout previously under-counted areas in Kitsap County. Unsheltered participants were asked to provide their current cities of residence, and 85 households (73%) provided this data.
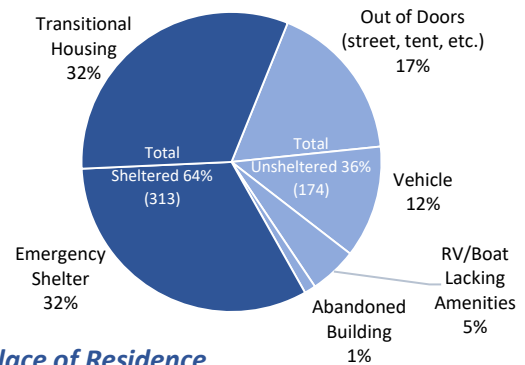

Characteristics

When asked about various personal characteristics, the most common response from survey participants was that they experienced challenges related to permanent disability, followed by mental illness, chronic health conditions, and chronic substance use.
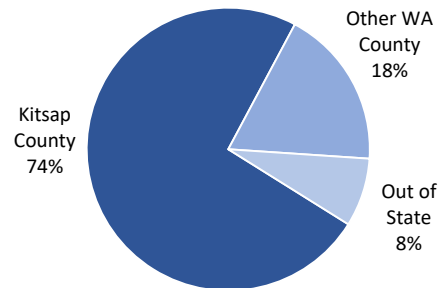

Defining Sheltered vs. Unsheltered

For the purposes of this survey, information is collected on sheltered (in emergency shelter or transitional housing) vs. unsheltered homelessness. In this year's count, 174 people said they were unsheltered. The majority of those who were unsheltered indicated they lived outside in places not meant for human habitation.
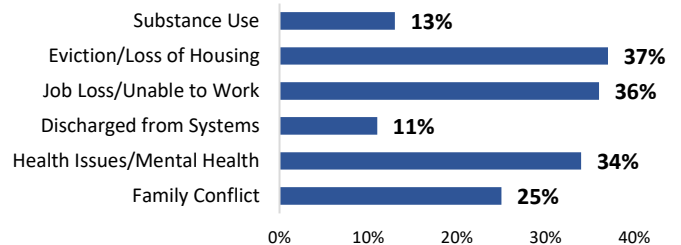

Last Place of Residence

Surveys also collected information about the last city of permanent residence, and 73% of households provided this data. 85 (74%) of those households previously had stable housing in Kitsap County.

Causes of Homelessness

When asked about the specific cause (or causes) of their homelessness, the most common response was housing issues (eviction or loss of housing), economic issues (loss of job or unable to work), followed by health issues (including mental health).

[1] In 2017 the Project Connect was hosted at the Salvation Army in Bremerton. In 2018 and 2019 the Project Connect was additionally offered at the Village Green Community Center in Kingston and at the Givens Center in Port Orchard.