

# KnoxHMIS

Annual Report

2019



SOCIAL WORK OFFICE OF  
RESEARCH & PUBLIC SERVICE

December 2020



# The University of Tennessee College of Social Work Office of Research and Public Service

*Nate First, LCSW, MA, KnoxHMIS Program Manager*

*David Patterson, PhD, KnoxHMIS Director/Principal Investigator*

*Shandra Forrest-Bank, PhD, UT SWORPS Director*

*Forrest Wentzel, BA, IT Specialist I*

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# 2019 Knox Homeless Management Information System Annual Report

The Knox Homeless Management Information System (KnoxHMIS) Annual Report has been completed every year since 2007. This report provides information on persons who accessed a service from one of 20<sup>1</sup> KnoxHMIS partner agencies for the 2019 calendar year. It should be noted that individuals included in this report represent all four types of homelessness as defined by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). This includes both literal homelessness and individuals at imminent risk of losing housing.

KnoxHMIS partners recorded **9,892** active clients in 2019, an **increase of 8% from the 9,183 reported in 2018**. **The number of new clients increased by 12%**. The reasons for these percentage change in overall clients reported as well as both new and continuing clients are examined in the body of this report.

This report is divided into 4 sections that include:

- (1) an executive summary,
- (2) new clients to KnoxHMIS partners,
- (3) active clients (including new persons and those continuing engagement from previous year),
- (4) subpopulations of active clients (i.e., families, unaccompanied youth, veterans, persons experiencing chronic homelessness as defined by HUD, street homeless, and seniors)

This report is meant to provide a clearer picture of homelessness in Knoxville so our community can continue to develop and implement an informed community response.

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<sup>1</sup> KnoxHMIS partner agencies include: Catholic Charities of East Tennessee, Compassion Coalition, C.O.N.N.E.C.T. Ministries, Family Promise of Knoxville, The Helen Ross McNabb Center, Knoxville-Knox County Community Action Committee, Knoxville's Community Development Corporation, Knox County Public Defender's Community Law Office, Knox Area Rescue Ministries, Knoxville Leadership Foundation, Mental Health Association of East Tennessee, Next Step Initiative, Parkridge Harbor/Positively Living, Salvation Army, Steps House, Volunteer Ministry Center, Volunteers of America, and YWCA Knoxville & the Tennessee Valley.

## Executive Summary

### 2019 KnoxHMIS Percentage Change

# +8%

increase in total clients  
(N=9,892).

# +12%

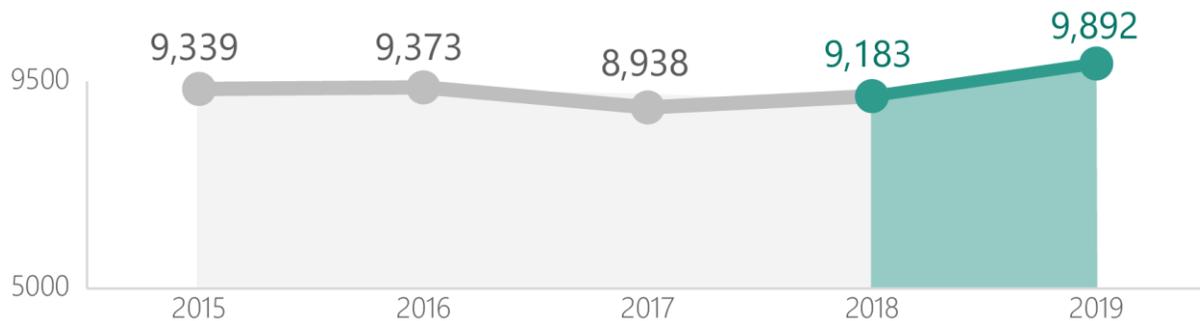
increase of new clients  
(n=4,115).

# +4%

increase in continuing clients  
(n=5,777).

Source: KnoxHMIS Annual Report 2019

### Five-Year Comparison of Total Active Clients



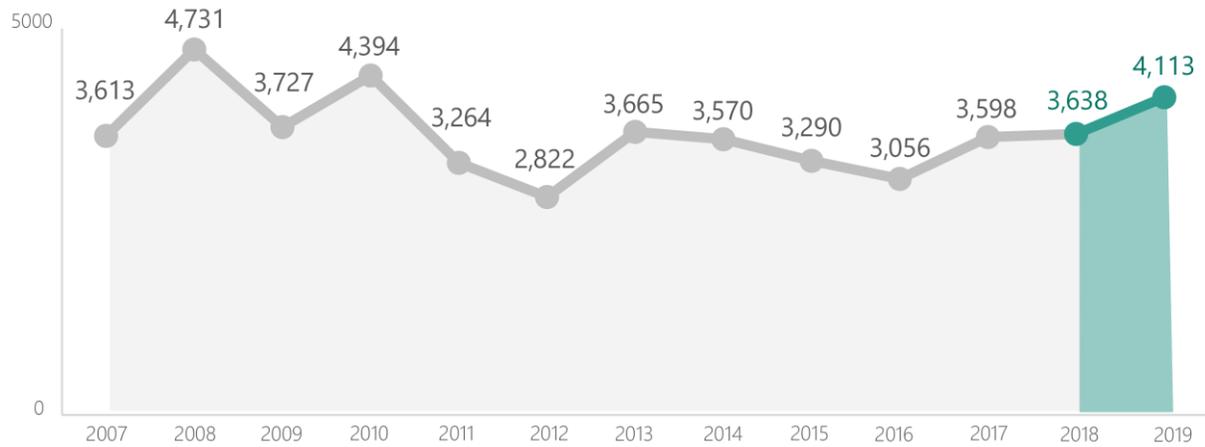
### Additional Facts

- 46% of new households reported lack of affordable housing as their primary reason for homelessness
- One in four (25%) were members of homeless families
- African Americans made up 9% of the Knox County population
  - but 30% of all active clients in KnoxHMIS
  - and 40% of unaccompanied youth.
- Street homelessness increased by 27%
- 42% of all clients were new to KnoxHMIS in 2019
- 28% of heads of household had experienced domestic violence
- 5% fewer veterans were active in KnoxHMIS
- 85% of heads of households were female
- 64% of chronically homeless were male

# 2019 New Clients

"New clients" are individuals either receiving services from KnoxHMIS partner agencies or having an entry/exit into a partner agency program in the year 2019 who have not previously accessed resources in years prior.

## Year-to-year Comparison of New Clients in KnoxHMIS



## 2019 Housing Status of New Clients



**2019 Housing Status of New Clients** illustrates the housing status of clients new to homeless services in 2019 (n=4115). Forty-two percent of all individuals accessing services were new to KnoxHMIS in 2019, of whom 94% were literally homeless. Additionally, 6% (n=257) of new clients were individuals at risk of homelessness and accessed homeless prevention and/or supportive services.

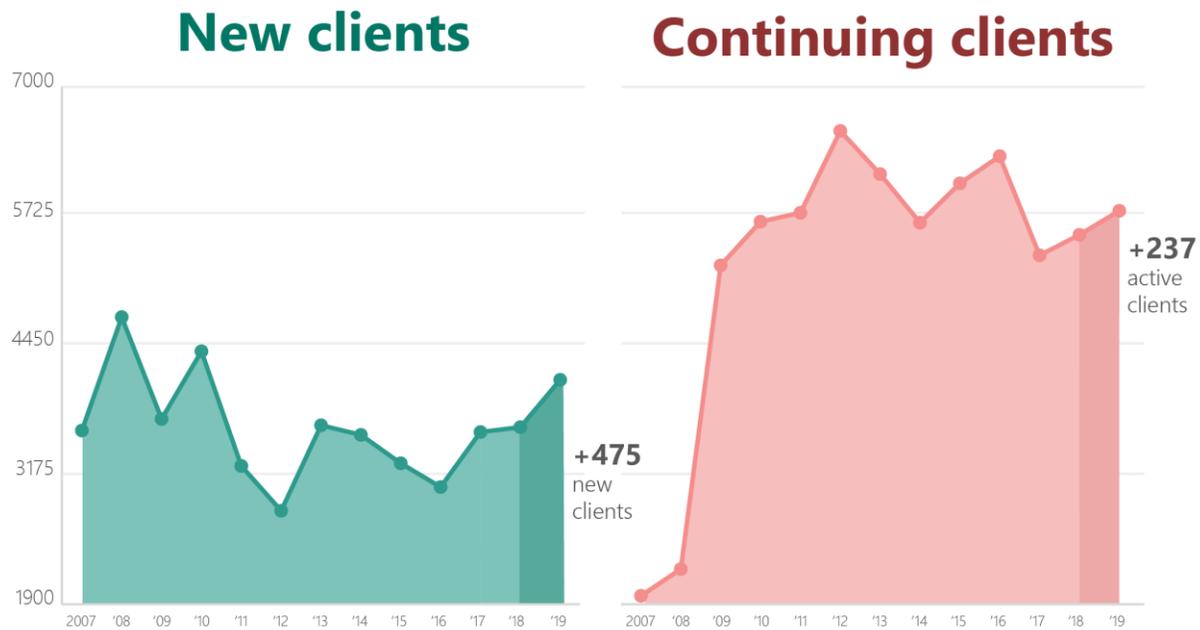
# 2019 Active Clients

## 2019 Housing Status of Active Clients



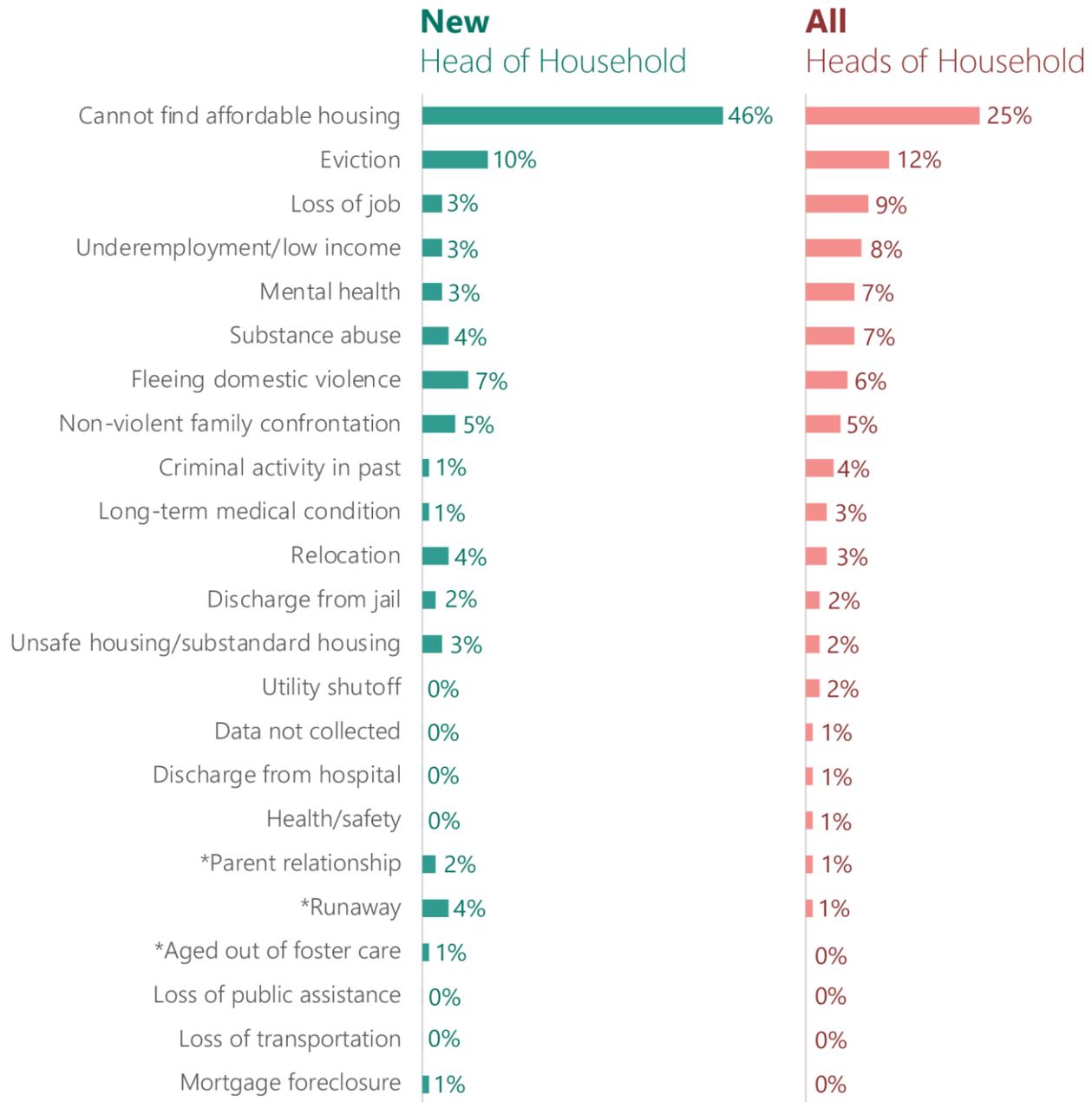
"Active clients" are individuals either receiving services from KnoxHMIS partner agencies or having an entry/exit into a partner agency program in the year 2019. This includes "new clients" and clients continuing to be engaged in services from the prior year.

## Count of Active Clients (2007-2019) by Subset



**Count of Active Clients (2007-2019) by Subset** represents the total number of active clients, those that are new to KnoxHMIS and those who are continuing to receive services, each year since 2007. The count of active clients is the sum of new and continuing clients. It is important to note that the increase in active clients since 2007 is **potentially indicative of improvements in agency data quality, increased utilization of KnoxHMIS, and the additional new partner agencies since 2013 – not necessarily an increase in the number** of individuals experiencing homelessness or at-risk of homelessness.

## 2019 Causes of Homelessness as Reported by Head of Household

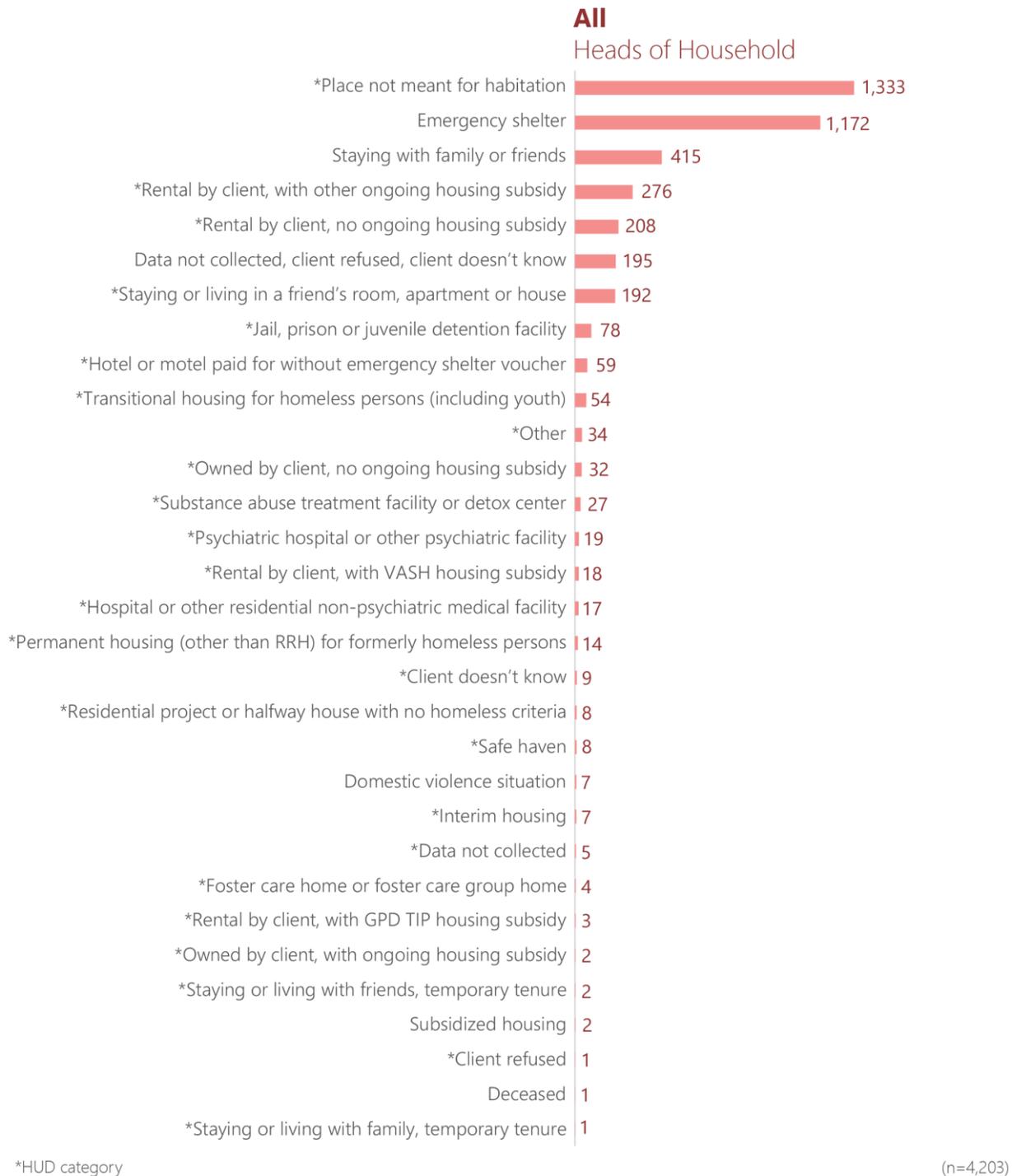


\*Youth specific

(n=3,846)

**2019 Causes of Homelessness as Reported by Head of Household** delineates the causes of homelessness (or *primary reason for homelessness*) among active *head of household* clients, both those new to homeless services and ALL active clients (including new). Overall, the top three reasons *reported* for homelessness by all heads of household (n=3,846) were: cannot find affordable housing (25%), eviction (12%), and loss of job (9%). Variables labeled as "YOUTH SPECIFIC" reflect data from youth only programming (such as runaway homeless youth or youth street outreach). "NULLS" reflect data not captured at program intake. Nulls are not included as "reported." Null results for all clients are n=357. It should be noted that this variable is based on the client's perception of his or her primary reason for homelessness and is self-reported at program intake. Therefore, this variable is subject to the social desirability bias in which individuals tend to respond in ways that will be viewed favorably by others.

## 2019 Residence Prior as Reported by Adults



**2019 Residence Prior<sup>2</sup> as Reported by Adults** delineates the most recent living situation prior to program entry among adult (ages 18 and older) clients.

<sup>2</sup> Residence prior is *not* the residence where the client was staying prior to the current episode of homelessness. Rather, it is where they were staying prior to entering the program for which they are seeking services.

## Demographics of Active Clients in KnoxHMIS in 2019

### Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Male* (n=5,320)	Female* (n=4,116)	Transgender/ Non- conforming (n=16)	Null Gender (n=138)	Active Clients (n and percent)
Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino	4,745	3,995	12	2	8,754 (88%)
Hispanic/Latino	144	157	3	0	304 (3%)
Null	431	264	1	138	834 (8%)

**88%**  
Non-Hispanic/  
Non-Latino

### Race

Race	Male* (n=5,320)	Female* (n=4,116)	Transgender/ Non- conforming (n=16)	Null Gender (n=138)	Active Clients (n and percent)
White	3,309	2,722	9	1	6,041 (61%)
Black or African American	1,538	1,389	6	0	2,933 (30%)
Other	80	67	0	0	147 (1%)
Null	393	238	1	139	771 (8%)

**61%**  
White

### Ages

Ages (Percentages are of clients who reported their age)	Active Clients (n and percent)
0-17	1,417 (15%)
18-24	789 (8%)
25-55	5,449 (56%)
56-61	1,034 (11%)
62+	1,060 (11%)
Null age	141/9,892 (1% total)

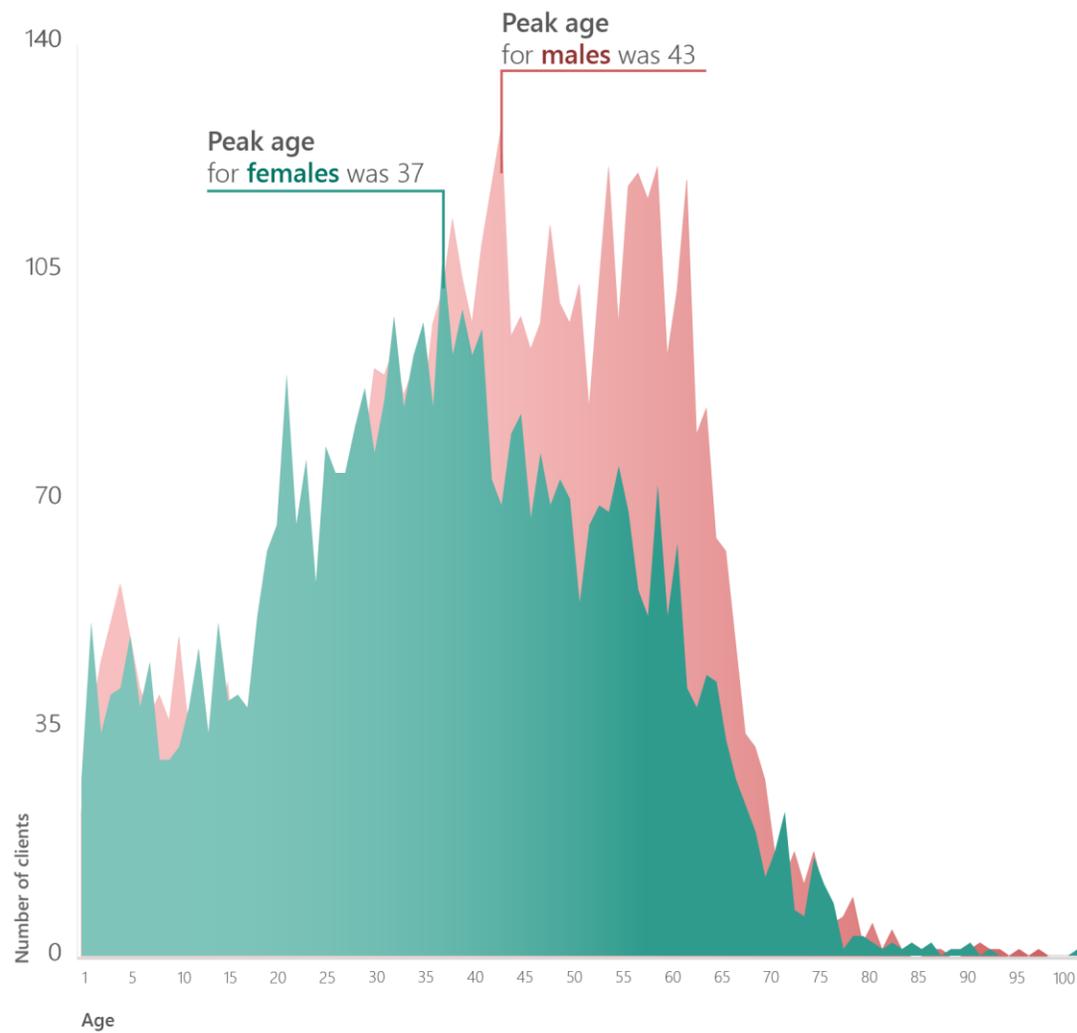
**39**  
Average age

The tables represent demographic information on active clients in 2019. The tables present the percentage of all active clients and delineates age, race, and ethnicity demographics into gender categories. KnoxHMIS data reflects that 30% of active clients are African American. Notably, Knox County's population is comprised of 9% African American individuals<sup>3</sup>. Approximately 17% of Tennessee's total population identifies as African American<sup>4</sup>. Therefore, a disproportionate percentage of individuals experiencing homelessness in both Knox County and the state of Tennessee are African American.

<sup>3</sup>United States Census Bureau (June 2019). Retrieved from <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/TN/knoxcounty>

<sup>4</sup>United States Census Bureau (June 2019). Retrieved from <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/TN>

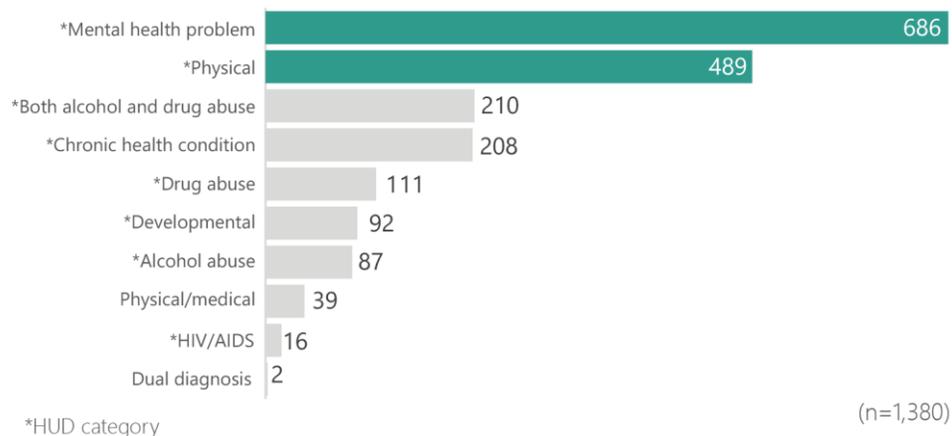
## Age Distribution of Active Clients in KnoxHMIS in 2019



In 2019, the **average** age for all clients was 39 (37 for females and 41 for males). The average age of transgender/gender nonconforming individuals active in KnoxHMIS in 2019 was 34 (n=18).

## Disability Types of Active Clients in KnoxHMIS in 2019

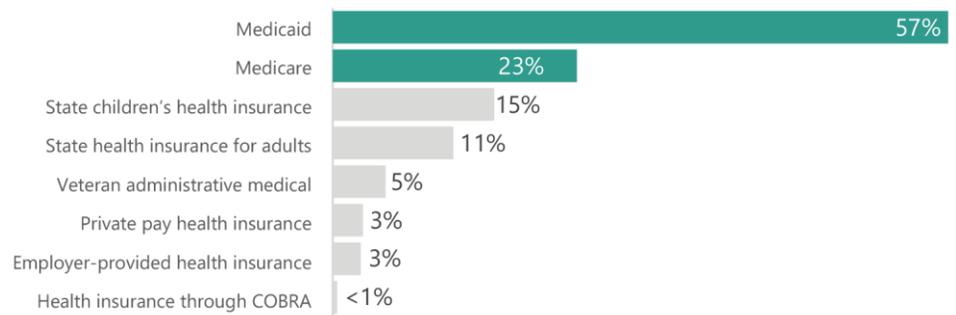
**14%**  
of active clients  
report having a  
**long-term  
disability**



The chart above shows the number of active clients with a reported disability. In 2019, 14% (n=1,380). **This percentage is likely underreported due to updates in the 2014 HUD Data Standards that determine disability based on a series of assessment questions that indicate an “expected long-continued and indefinite duration” of the disability.** HUD also provides guidance that disability data is to be captured on *all* clients participating in HMIS, *both adults and children under 18*. It is likely that disability is further underreported because parents may be less likely to share the disability of children in the household. Further, disability data is typically captured during the client intake, when the client may not feel comfortable sharing disability information. It should be noted that a person can report more than one disability type, so disability counts will be greater than the total number of persons who reported a disability.

## Health Insurance Types of Active Clients in 2019

**27%**  
of persons  
receiving  
homeless services  
in 2019  
**had insurance**



Percentages do not equal 100%  
because respondents could have multiple selections.

(n=2,626)

**In 2019**, 27% of persons receiving homeless services had insurance. 80% of insured clients reported either Medicaid or Medicare, up from 72% in 2018.

# 2019 Subpopulations of Active Clients

Six subpopulations (families, youth, veterans, chronically homeless, street homeless, and seniors) are included in the KnoxHMIS Annual Report because they are either a national or a local priority initiative. Addressing *Street* and *Senior* homelessness are local partner priorities. Ending family, youth, veteran, and chronic homelessness are national initiatives issued by the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, *Revising and Strengthening the Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness*<sup>5</sup> (2017).

According **This section looks at both changes in subpopulations year to year (both active and continuing) and details characteristics of the subpopulations in comparison to the overall number of active clients served in KnoxHMIS in 2019.** Various factors affect changes in the subpopulations such as the amount of funding designated to services, mandated data reporting and input, and data quality can increase or decrease the number included in a subpopulation.



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<sup>5</sup>For more information, see the full United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, *Home, Together* at <http://www.usich.gov/home-together>

## Summary — Subpopulations<sup>6</sup> of Active Clients in KnoxHMIS in 2019

The following summary highlights the number of active KnoxHMIS clients per subpopulation in 2019, as compared with 2018.

### Subpopulations of Active Clients 2019

Subpopulation	2018 (N=9,183)	% of Active Clients	2019 (N=9,892)	% of Active Clients	Year to Year % Change
Individuals in Families	2,246 (716 families)	25%	2,502 (808 families)	25%	10%
Youth	815	9%	789	8%	-3%
Veterans	774	8%	739	7%	-5%
Chronically Homeless	627	7%	775	8%	19%
Street Homeless	1,899	21%	2,415	24%	27%
Seniors	995	11%	1,060	11%	7%

<sup>6</sup>Subpopulations were determined by priority initiatives as designated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Department of Veteran Affairs, Family and Youth Services Bureau, Knoxville City government, Knox County government, and KnoxHMIS partner agencies.

# Homeless Subpopulations

## Family Characteristics

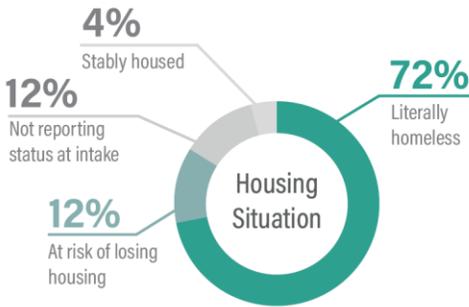
**Families** are defined by KnoxHMIS as: households consisting of a minimum of two individuals, at least one must be under age 18.

**808** total households

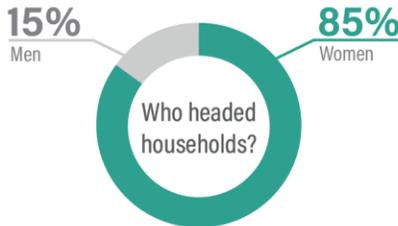
Leading reported causes of homelessness

- 31%** Could not find affordable housing
- 15%** Evicted
- 13%** Fled from domestic violence

 Most are literally homeless



 Households



-  **39%** included four or more members
-  **3%** were senior headed households

 Engagement with agencies



**46%** of all families engaged with family-specific agencies.

Agencies include Helen Ross McNabb Center; Youth LINC; Host Homes Prevention; Youth Street Outreach; Knoxville-Knox County Community Action Committee Youth WINS; and KARM Family Emergency Services.

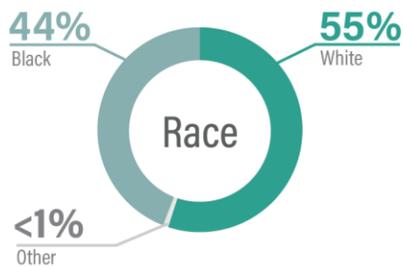
# Family Characteristics

This data is a summary of individuals in families.

**2,502** individuals in families  
 (25% of all active KnoxHMIS clients served in 2019)



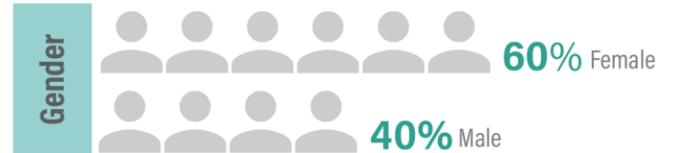
## More were white and not Hispanic



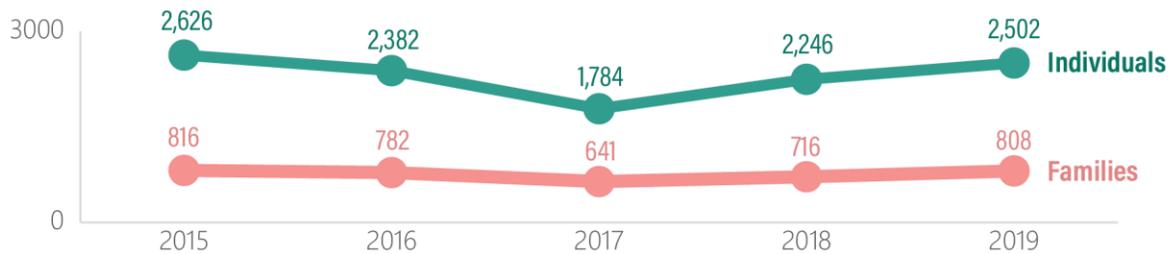
**Other Race:** <1% American Indian or Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

**Ethnicity:** 6% Hispanic/Latino

## Most identified as female



## Families 5-year comparison



# Unaccompanied Youth Characteristics

**Unaccompanied Youth** are defined as: persons ages 12 through 24 on their own without a parent or guardian (as per federal HEARTH Act and Runaway Homeless Youth Act guidance.)

# 789 / 9,892

(8% of all active KnoxHMIS clients served in 2019)

## Leading reported causes of homelessness

**30%**

Could not find affordable housing

**15%**

Parent relationship

**10%**

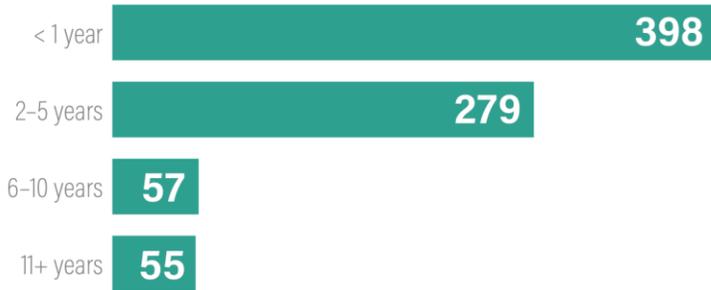
Non-violent family confrontation



## Housing status



## Duration in KnoxHMIS



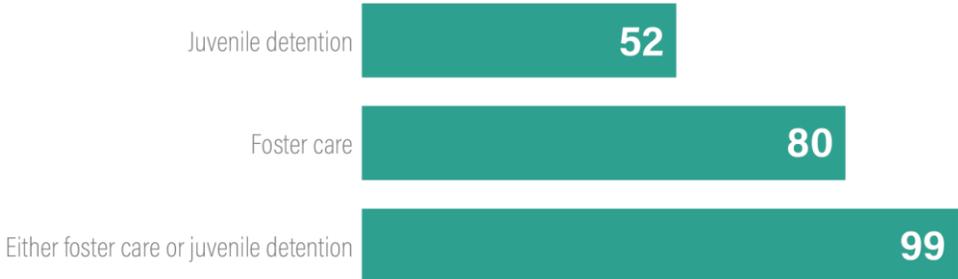
## Engagement with Agencies

**46%** of all youth engaged with youth-specific agencies.

Youth-specific programs accessed by youth include CAC's Youth WINS program as well as the following McNabb programs: Runaway Host Homes, Runaway Prevention, Youth LINC Supportive Community Living, Youth LINC Transitional Living, and Youth Street Outreach.

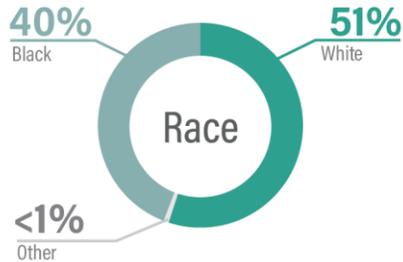


## Institutional living



# Unaccompanied Youth Characteristics

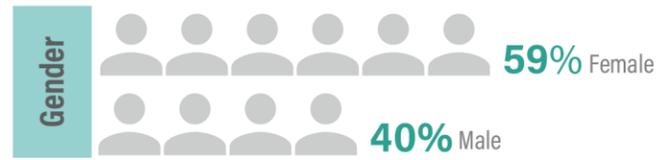
## More were white and not Hispanic



**Other Race:** <1% American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, Other, or Other Multi-racial; 8% NULL

**Ethnicity:** 88% Non-Hispanic/Latino; 4% Hispanic/Latino; 8% NULL

## Most identified as female



<1% Transgender  
<1% NULL



Average age  
**21**



LGBTQ+  
**21%**

## Unaccompanied youth 5-year comparison



# Veteran Characteristics

**Veterans** are defined by KnoxHMIS as: any person who self-reports they were enrolled in or actively serve in the United States Armed forces. Veteran status is not dependent on a person's military discharge status. A dishonorable discharge limits eligibility for certain Veteran Affairs benefits and programs, but a person is still a veteran in KnoxHMIS.

# 739 / 9,892

(7% of all active KnoxHMIS clients served in 2019)

## Leading reported causes of homelessness

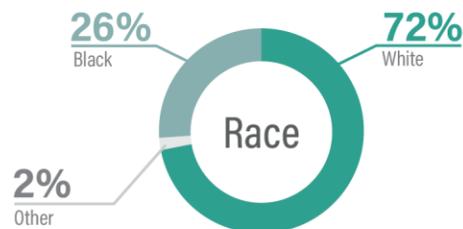


## Housing status



"Stably housed" typically refers to those with recent history of homelessness. Many are now in permanent supportive housing due to support from community providers. Percentages based on clients with reported housing status (null = 189). Percentages do not add up to 100 due to rounded subtotals.

## Most were white and not Hispanic



**Other Race:** 2% American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, or Other Multi-racial

**Ethnicity:** 1% Hispanic/Latino; 98% not Hispanic/Latino; 1% NULL

## Age

Average  
**54**

# Veteran Characteristics

## Most identified as male

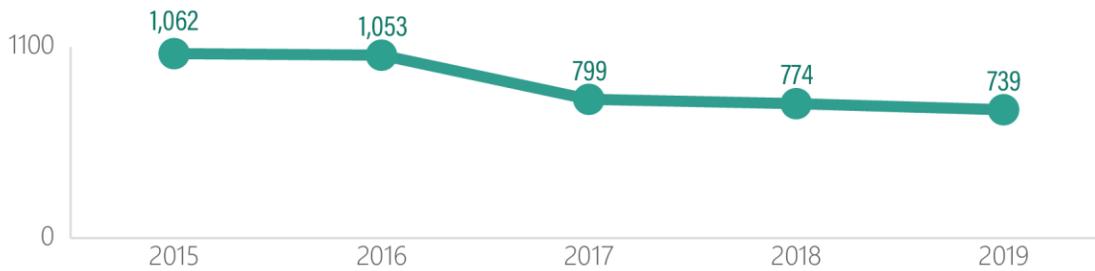


## Engagement with agencies

**43%** of all veterans engaged with veteran-specific agencies.

Services assessed: STEPS House, Knoxville Community Development Corporation HUD-VASH, Volunteers of America, and Helen Ross McNabb Center (Cedar Crossing, Middlebrook Pike and Washington Oaks)

## Veterans 5-year comparison



# Chronic Homelessness Characteristics

**Chronic Homelessness** is a characteristic of an individual’s homelessness experience and is defined by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development as an individual or family who has been living in a place not meant for human habitation, safe haven, or emergency shelter continually for at least a year or has had at least four separate occasions of homelessness in the last three years and is the head of household in a family or the individual has a diagnosable disabling condition.

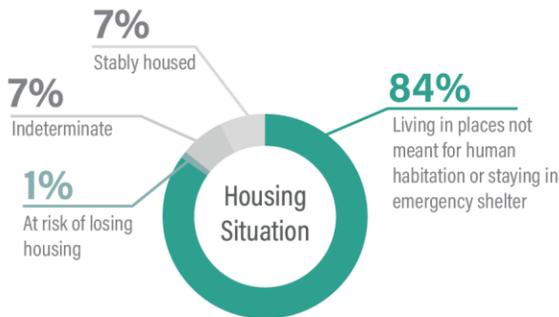
# 739 / 9,892

(7% of all active KnoxHMIS clients served in 2019)

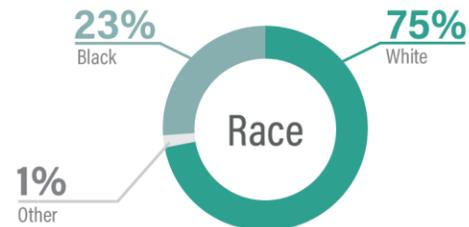
## Leading reported causes of homelessness



## Housing status



## Most were white and not Hispanic



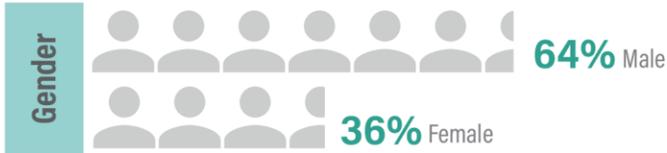
**Other Race:** 1% American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, or Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

**Ethnicity:** 1% Hispanic/Latino

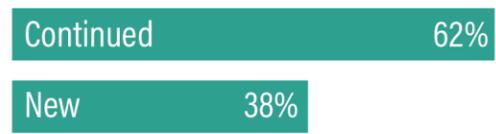
Age		
Mode	Average	Standard deviation
<b>40</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>12</b>

# Chronic Homelessness Characteristics

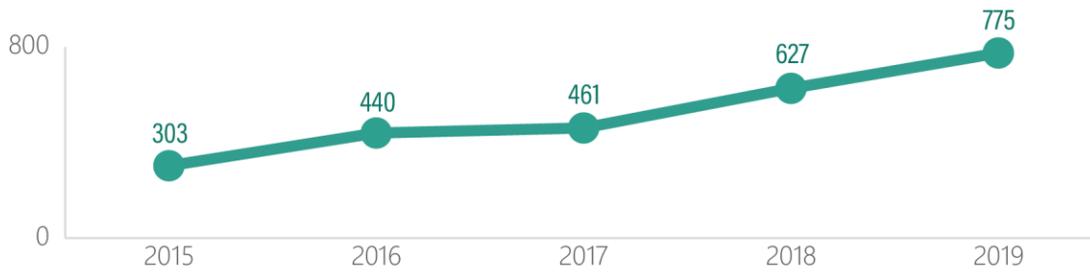
## Most identified as male



## Engagement with agencies



## Chronic homelessness 5-year comparison



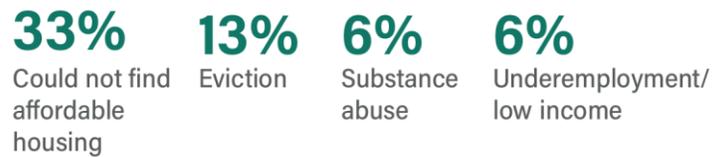
# Street Homelessness Characteristics

**Street Homelessness** is a characteristic of an individual's homelessness experience and is defined by KnoxHMIS as: any individual who lives in a place not meant for human habitation such as sleeping in a public space, car, abandoned building, and/or camping outdoors.

# 739 / 9,892

(7% of all active KnoxHMIS clients served in 2019)

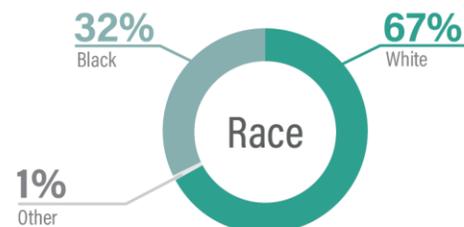
## Leading reported causes of homelessness



## Engagement with agencies



## Most were white and not Hispanic

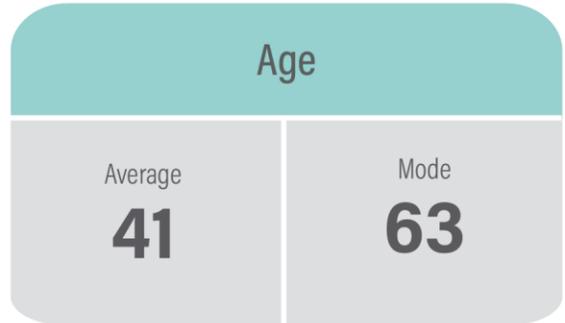
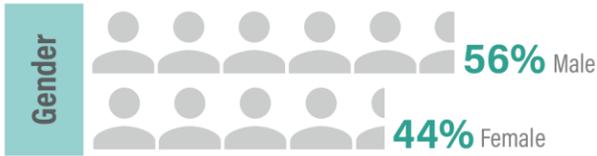


**Other Race:** 1% American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, or Native Hawaiian, Other Pacific Islander, or Other Multi-racial

**Ethnicity:** 3% Hispanic/Latino

# Street Homelessness Characteristics

Most identified as male



Street homelessness 5-year comparison



# Senior Characteristics

Seniors are defined by KnoxHMIS as: any person who is equal to or older than 62 years of age.

**1,060** / 9,892  
 (11% of all active KnoxHMIS clients served in 2019)

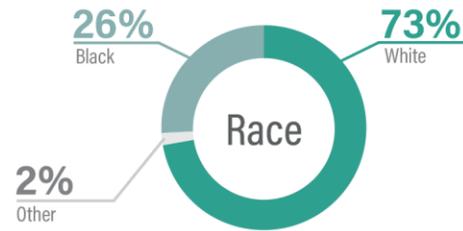
## Leading reported causes of homelessness



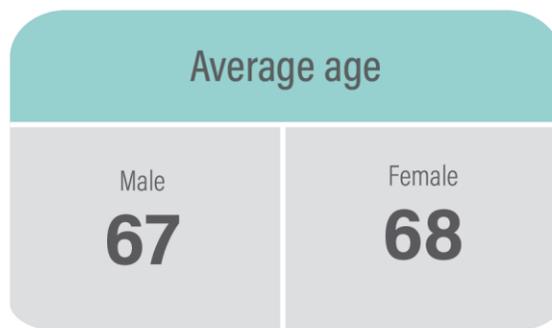
## Housing status



## Most were white and not Hispanic



**Other Race:** 1% American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, or Native Hawaiian, Other Pacific Islander, or Other Multi-racial  
**Ethnicity:** 1% Hispanic/Latino



# Senior Characteristics

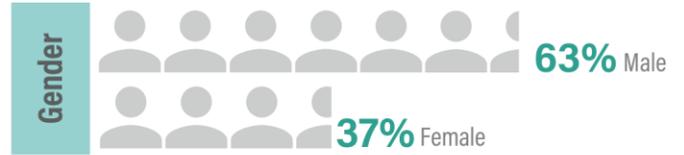
## Engagement with Agencies



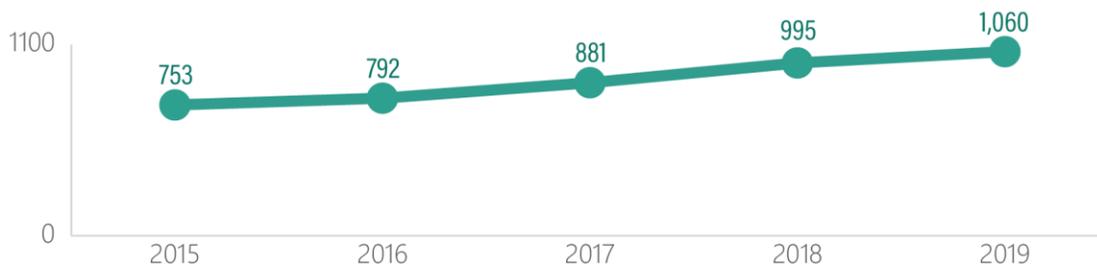
**28%** of all seniors engaged with senior-specific agencies.

Senior-Specific Programs included the Knoxville-Knox County's Community Action Committee (Office on Aging; High Rise Case Management, and Project LIVE), as well as Catholic Charities Samaritan Place (Emergency Shelter, Permanent Supportive Housing, and Transitional Housing).

## Most identified as male



## Seniors 5-year comparison



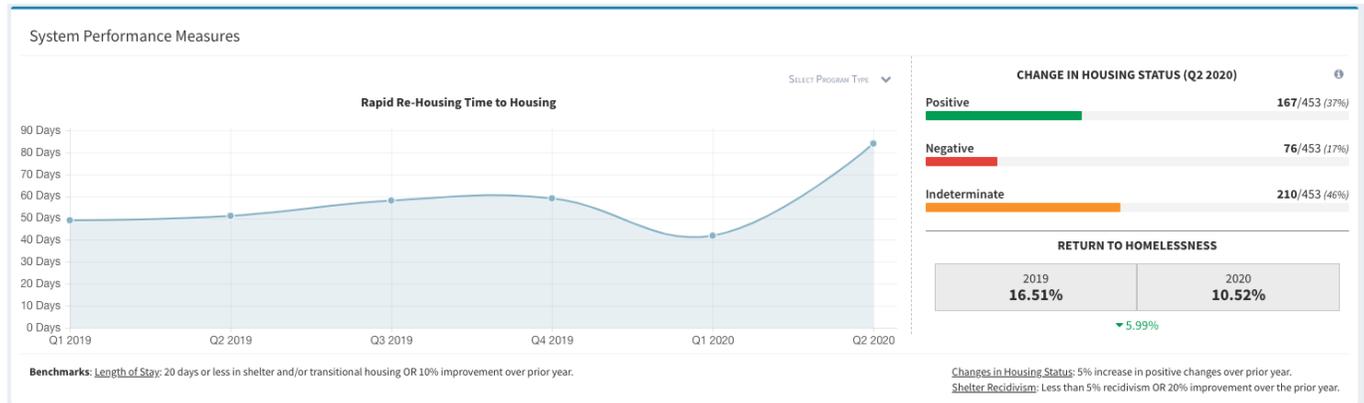
## Additional Resources featuring KnoxHMIS Partner Data

### Community Dashboard on Homelessness

<http://knoxhmis.org/dashboard/>



An interactive, public-facing website that has homelessness counts, length of stay, time to exit, return to homelessness, housing placement status, point in time counts, bed-utilization rates, and subpopulation data (e.g. youth, families, veterans, and seniors). The dashboard is based on the calendar year and is updated quarterly.



### Knox Housing Help

<http://knoxhousinghelp.com/>

A public-facing directory of services provided by community partner agencies for those experiencing homelessness or a housing crisis.

### National Alliance to End Homelessness: State of Homelessness Report 2020

<https://endhomelessness.org/homelessness-in-america/homelessness-statistics/state-of-homelessness-2020/>

The *State of Homelessness in America* is a public-facing website that charts progress in ending homelessness in the United States. Features include national, state, and county level data filters. Using the most recently available national data, the website is intended to serve as a reference for policymakers, journalists, advocates, and the public on trends in homelessness, homeless assistance, and at-risk populations at the national and state levels.



### CoC Housing Inventory Count (HIC) Reports

[https://files.hudexchange.info/reports/published/CoC\\_HIC\\_CoC\\_TN-502-2019\\_TN\\_2019.pdf](https://files.hudexchange.info/reports/published/CoC_HIC_CoC_TN-502-2019_TN_2019.pdf)

A community's inventory of housing that is conducted annually during the last ten days of January. Inventories are available at the national and state level, as well as for each CoC. The reports tally the number of beds and units available on the night designated for the count by program type and include beds dedicated to serve persons who are homeless as well as persons in Permanent Supportive Housing. New for this year, the reports also include data on beds dedicated to serve specific subpopulations.

### CoC Homeless Populations and Subpopulations Reports

[https://files.hudexchange.info/reports/published/CoC\\_PopSub\\_CoC\\_TN-502-2019\\_TN\\_2019.pdf](https://files.hudexchange.info/reports/published/CoC_PopSub_CoC_TN-502-2019_TN_2019.pdf)

A report that provides counts for sheltered and unsheltered homeless persons by household type and subpopulation, available at the national and state level and for each Continuum of Care.

## National Summary System Performance Measures 2015 – 2018

<https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/National-Summary-of-Homeless-System-Performance-2015-2018.pdf>

An Excel workbook that contains HMIS system performance measure information by Continuum of Care since FY 2015, for use in local analysis.

**Thank you** to our community partners  
for your relentless efforts to serve our most vulnerable neighbors.

