

NCSHA 2015 Annual Awards Entry Form

(Complete one form for each entry)

Deadline: Wednesday, June 10, 2015

Visit ncsha.org/awards to view the Annual Awards Call for Entries.

Instructions: Type entry information into the form and save it as a PDF. Do not write on or scan the form. If you have any questions contact Matt Cunningham at mcunningham@ncsha.org or 202-624-5424.

Fill out the entry name *exactly* as you want it listed in the program.

Entry Name: _____

HFA: _____

Submission Contact: (Must be HFA Staff Member) _____ **Email:** _____

Please provide a 15-word (maximum) description of your nomination to appear on the NCSHA website.

Use this header on the upper right corner of each page:

HFA: _____

Entry Name: _____

Select the appropriate subcategory of your entry and indicate if you are providing visual aids.

Communications	Homeownership	Legislative Advocacy	Management Innovation
Annual Report	Empowering New Buyers	Federal Advocacy	Financial
Creative Media	Encouraging New Production	State Advocacy	Human Resources
Promotional Materials and Newsletters	Home Improvement and Rehabilitation		Operations
			Technology
Rental Housing	Special Needs Housing	Special Achievement	Are you providing visual aids?
Encouraging New Production	Combating Homelessness	Special Achievement	Yes
Multifamily Management	Housing for Persons with Special Needs		No
Preservation and Rehabilitation			

An Innovative Methodology for Enumerating Homelessness in Georgia

Georgia Department of Community Affairs/Georgia Housing and Finance Authority

Background

Every other year Continua of Care are required by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to count the number of unsheltered homeless people in their respective jurisdictions. For some smaller Continua this isn't too arduous a task; however, there are 42 Balance of State Continua of Care in the United States who are presented with the task of enumerating the number of unsheltered homeless in their nearly statewide administration. The Georgia Balance of the State Continuum of Care (BoS CoC), which is coordinated by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA), covers 152 of Georgia's 159 counties, a geography stretching more than 500 miles from the state's border with Tennessee and Florida. Many of the counties served by the BoS CoC are rural, which presents a significant challenge in conducting a point in time count of unsheltered individuals and families. Many of those counties have no formal homeless service providers that could help obtain information about the number of unsheltered homeless. Not only that, but rural homelessness is often hidden from view because those who are experiencing homelessness are not able to find any emergency shelter and are staying in wooded areas, encampments, or abandoned buildings away from roads and communities. Traditional street count methodologies in which volunteers go out on one night to physically count unsheltered individuals simply would not capture a true picture of homelessness in rural Georgian communities. Additionally, limited resources in terms of both funding and staff, hinder the ability to conduct a count across 152 counties. The challenges involved in executing this unsheltered count such as the physical difficulties of locating unsheltered individuals and families, the requirement of different approaches in urban versus rural areas, and the limited training of volunteers who can collect vital count information were apparent, but a solution was not. In order to satisfy the HUD count requirement and to improve DCA's ability to strategically allocate resources and develop a statewide plan, DCA partnered with Kennesaw State University (KSU) in 2008 to develop an innovative way to provide statewide statistics on homelessness. Together we successfully utilized inferential statistics in order to arrive at an estimate of the number of homeless in the state of Georgia at any single point in time. This solution was something that no other community or Balance of State CoC had accomplished to date and is now the endorsed by HUD as an efficient and effective way for geographically large CoCs to conduct a Point in Time Count.

The Statistical Model

This homeless count estimate is generated using a multiple regression model that predicts the rate of homelessness in each county in Georgia based on a number of factors. The development of this model had several components. Because in 2008 no statistically valid models for estimating the number of homeless families and individuals existed, DCA partnered with KSU to develop a multi-step inferential statistics approach to the statewide homeless count which involved cluster analysis, stratified sampling, and multiple regression analysis. The first component of the methodology was the grouping of counties into clusters so that a sampling methodology could be used. This clustering was done because the populations of the various counties across the state are not the same. They exhibit different characteristics, thus applying one model to all the counties in the BoS CoC would not accurately take into account these variations in the populations of each county and region. KSU employed a statistical methodology called a cluster analysis which grouped different counties across Georgia, based on key demographic and economic characteristics from the Census such as poverty, education, economic, courts and crime, government, health, housing, labor, and public assistance. The stratified cluster analysis generated 9 clusters of counties. Narrowing down the counties to these 9 clusters allowed for the use of stratified sampling where we are able to gather data from sample counties in each cluster. This data can then be generalized to the counties that exhibit similar characteristics to get an accurate homeless count. When we began this project in 2008, just 23 counties conducted a physical

count. In 2015, 69 counties conducted physical counts. The more counties in which we are able obtain a physical count, the better we can ensure the accuracy of the prediction we make.

The second component was the development and implementation of the survey methodology in each of the sample counties. Because the majority of the 152 counties in the Balance of State were rural, a service-based count methodology was selected. The service-based count methodology was adapted from several other states that had successfully utilized the methodology in rural communities. A two page survey was developed in 2008 and has been refined for each point in time count not only to meet the HUD data reporting requirements but also to meet the needs in our state. The Georgia Housing Status Survey collects minimal identifying information (for de-duplication purposes) as well as data regarding housing status, demographics, household information, chronic homeless and special needs. In the survey, respondents are asked where they spent the night on the date of the point in time count. This survey is completed and collected at various service centers and homeless resource facilities in the participating counties for the entire week after the point in time count date. This week long timeframe ensures that all the homeless in that county complete the Georgia Housing Status Survey. The use of this survey also allows counties to collect information both on literally unsheltered individuals and families (by HUD's definition) and individuals and families who were precariously housed. Although HUD does not require that we report data on those who are precariously housed in the BoS CoC, the ability to collect information on the precariously housed population is often times critical for these communities. Recruited counties receive training from DCA regarding survey completion and collection, volunteer recruitment and training, and overall count coordination. When the point in time count is completed and all surveys are collected, they are sent to KSU for data entry, cleaning, and analysis.

The final component of the methodology is the regression analysis. A multiple regression analysis predicts one dependent variable based on several independent variables. Using the initial estimates of homelessness (based on the counts in the participating counties) as the dependent variable, multiple regression models are developed using a combination of the previously mentioned demographic and economic characteristics from the Census. Those variables are used to create a model which predicts the rate of homelessness in each county statewide. We generate a prediction of homelessness in each county by applying the rate of homelessness for each county to its respective population. This methodology provides us with a number of estimated homeless individuals for every county in Georgia, allowing us to calculate a statewide homeless count figure.

In 2008, the methodology took the unsheltered homeless count in 23 counties to provide an actual or predicted count of unsheltered homeless persons by county for all 159 of Georgia's counties. The methodology has been utilized in 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015 after some refinement of the model based on experiences from previous counts and adjustments for updated demographic data. Because of the success that we have had using this methodology, we have shared our knowledge and insight with other CoCs in the US and Canada that are experiencing similar challenges in enumerating their homeless population so that they may replicate this approach in their communities.

Benefits

The benefits that result from this innovative count methodology clearly outweigh the cost. The resources required to conduct the count are minimal considering the outcome. The majority of the resources required were the cost of KSU to develop the model, enter the data and do the statistical analysis, and to pay a count coordinator at the state level. Minimal funding is also used to provide sample counties with a small stipend for supplies as well. The cost of \$60,000 for initial model development and the average of \$44,000 per year to conduct the count is minimal when compared to the benefits to the state including eligibility for funding, improved state and local planning, and strategic allocation of resources. Each year DCA submits homeless count data to HUD in the Balance of the State Continuum of Care (BoS CoC) applications. The BoS CoC has scored high enough in the national competition to be awarded new projects for the last two years. The

BoS CoC brought in more than \$14 million under the 2014 competition, and the Continuum received funding for all of the new projects that were in Tier 2, preserving these scarce resources. These new projects may not have been funded without the count data which was included in the application, meaning that the dollars spent on the Point in Time count were able to secure over \$654,000 of funding to the continuum for 2014 alone. In addition, the methodology employed saves the BoS CoC thousands of dollars when considering the amount of resources that would be required to conduct a physical homeless count in all 152 counties it serves. The count has also provided DCA with extremely valuable data which has been used for resource allocation, strategic planning and collaboration with other state agencies. To date DCA has been able to publish four reports presenting the count data combined with other sources of data on homelessness in Georgia which have allowed us to raise awareness and provide information on need. We have numerous requests for county specific count information from local providers and local governments for use in grant applications, consolidated planning, and local comprehensive planning. This information would not be available without DCA employing this approach. The innovative methodology has helped to raise local awareness in rural communities that never realized that there was a homelessness issue in their community. The count data also provides DCA with information to guide how federal and state funds are allocated in Georgia. Currently, there are not enough beds to house the number of homeless in Georgia. However, beginning in 2009, the reports on homelessness have helped to highlight the fact that a great deal of this need is actually in the suburban and rural areas of Georgia rather than in the state's most urban communities. The result has allowed DCA, through the State Interagency Council on Homelessness and our partnerships with nonprofits and local governments across the state to develop approaches that ensure all of Georgia's counties have access to homeless assistance. Georgia's homeless count methodology serves as a key tool in understanding the magnitude and scope of the homeless need in Georgia.

Moving Forward

For the 2015 Unsheltered Point in Time Homeless count, DCA partnered with 2 other CoCs to employ this methodology as part of their official approach to meeting this HUD mandate. The City of Atlanta CoC, Columbus-Muscogee County CoC, and the Georgia Balance of State CoC all utilized the Georgia Housing Status Survey to collect descriptive and demographic data on those experiencing housing difficulties. That data was then processed at KSU's Burruss Institute and analyzed by KSU's Department of Mathematics and Statistics. We are encouraged by the participation of other CoCs in this methodology. The more CoCs that implement this inferential statistics model, the closer the state of Georgia will come to reporting uniform, deduplicated, comprehensive data to HUD. Although this may require some adjustment to the way CoCs in the state of Georgia conduct their count, those adjustments will be well worth the level of accuracy and integrity gained from a consolidated method for enumerating the homeless population of such a vast, diverse state.

We continue innovating and revising this process using input from all the communities, including other CoCs that partner with us. Their work at the local level is the most crucial part of this count, and we encourage their input to better inform our process moving forward. In the 2017 Point in Time homeless count, DCA will utilize a mobile application for volunteers to collect the survey data on smart phones and tablets in order to improve ease of data collection and to cut down on its costs. Although improvements are being made to better assist communities in participating, the heart of our work will continue to center on the use of this innovative and replicable homeless count methodology that provides the key to understanding the scope and magnitude of homelessness in Georgia.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

2013 DCA Homeless Count Report

2013 Every Georgian Counts

2015 PIT Results Summary

GEORGIA'S 17,000



2013 Report on Homelessness

Georgia's 17,000 2013 Report on Homelessness

Homelessness in Georgia

In 2013, DCA used the following categories to define homelessness:

- **Literally Homeless**
 - Sheltered Homeless – lives in emergency shelter, transitional housing for homeless persons or a hotel or motel with the stay being paid for by an organization
 - Unsheltered Homeless – lives in a car, park, abandoned building, encampment, dilapidated building, on the sidewalk, or similar location
- **Imminently Homeless** – is facing loss of housing within two weeks, has no subsequent residence identified, and lacks the resources or support networks needed to obtain other permanent housing
- **Other Homeless** – is in jail, a hospital, or a detox program, but would otherwise have been homeless

In addition to people who live in these circumstances, other people are living in motels, hotels, or are doubled up with friends or family. They may move frequently among temporary living arrangements. For some public programs, these living conditions also are categorized as homelessness.

The unifying condition for virtually all of Georgia's homeless population is poverty. Many people who are homeless also experience some type of personal vulnerability that places them at risk, such as:

- Family violence
- Physical disability or chronic medical problems
- Mental illness
- Substance abuse
- Developmental disability or brain injury
- Criminal background

¹ Based on the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's definition of homelessness in 2012.

Georgia's Continuums of Care (as of January 2013)

- Athens-Clarke County
- Augusta-Richmond County
- Cobb County
- Columbus-Muscogee County
- Georgia Balance of State (152 counties, administered by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs)
- Metro Atlanta Tri-Jurisdictional Collaborative on Homelessness (City of Atlanta, DeKalb County, and Fulton County)
- Savannah-Chatham County

Georgia's Homeless Population

In the last ten days of January 2013, all seven of the state's homeless program regions, called Continuums of Care, conducted a count of homeless individuals and families. The resulting homeless census provides an indication of the size and characteristics of the state's homeless population.

On the night of January 28, at least 16,947 people were literally homeless in Georgia – a 15.1% decrease from 2011. Just under half were unsheltered; the other 50% were in emergency or transitional housing. This marks the first year that sheltered homeless persons outnumber unsheltered homeless persons in Georgia.

Georgia's Literally Homeless Population: Single Night (Point in Time Count)

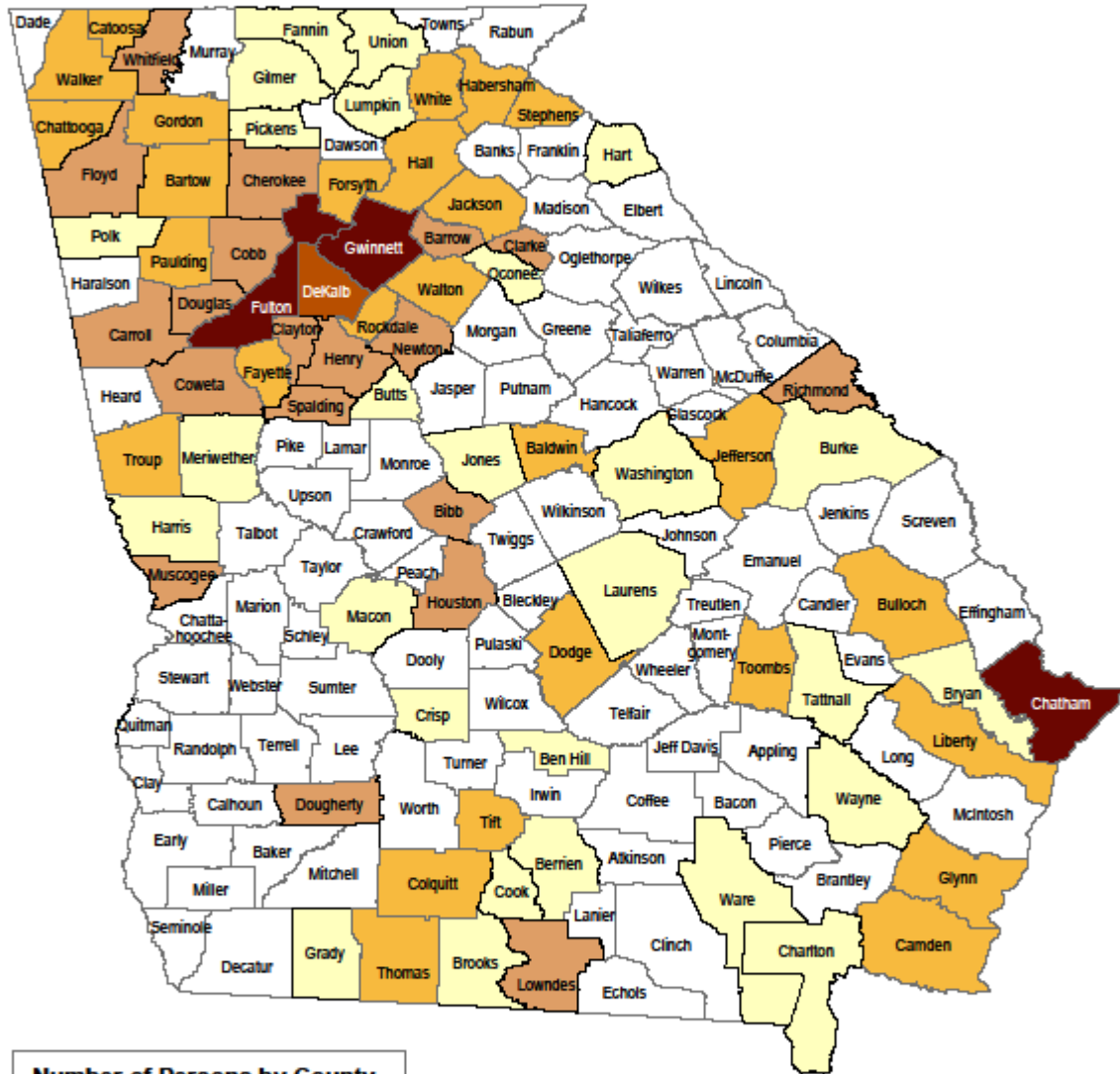
Housing Status	Number of Individuals per Year		
	2009	2011	2013
Unsheltered	12,101	11,384	8,450
Emergency Shelter or Transitional Housing	8,994	8,492	8,497
Total	21,095	19,876	16,947
Change from previous count (%)		6%	15%

In addition to the literally homeless population, DCA counted 4,047 precariously housed persons on the count night.

Georgia's homeless population isn't static; some of the people who were homeless on the January count date will find housing. Other people, who had housing on the count night, will later become homeless. An estimated 53,553 people experienced literal homelessness in Georgia in 2013. This is 13.9% lower than the 2011 estimate.

2013 Statewide Report on Homelessness

Homeless Persons (Sheltered and Unsheltered)



Number of Persons by County

- 0 - 24
- 25 - 49
- 50 - 99
- 100 - 499
- 500 - 999
- 1000 - 5959

Source: 2013 Sheltered Count;
2013 Unsheltered Count and Predictive Model
This map reflects circumstances on the night of January 28, 2013.



The Face of Homelessness in Georgia: The Georgia Housing Status Survey

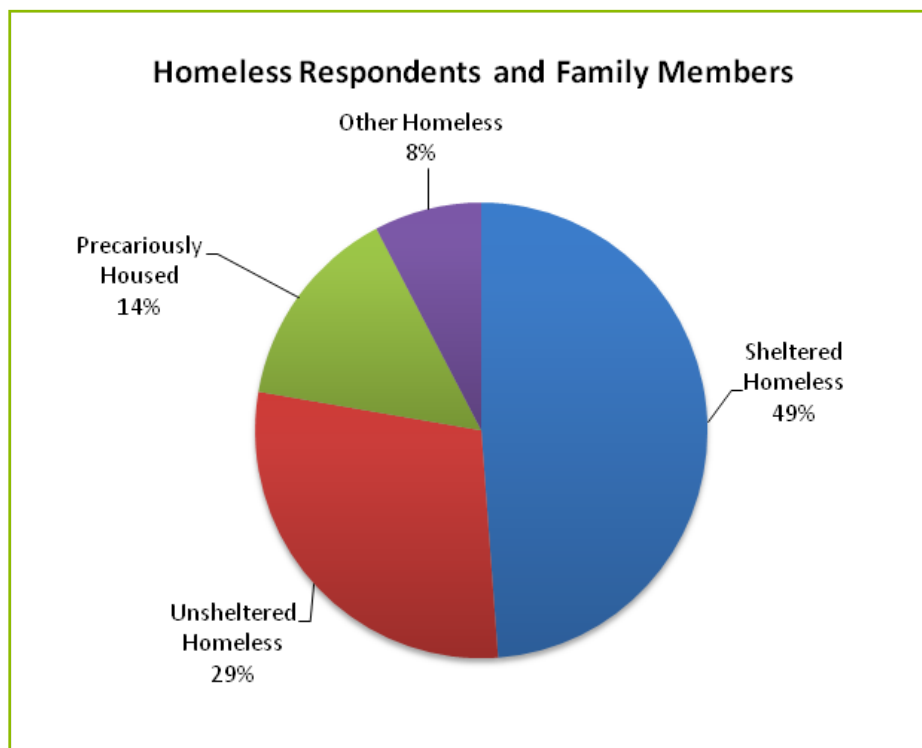
In January 2013, DCA distributed and collected 5,645 surveys in 75 counties for the State's homeless count. 2,498 of the respondents were homeless. The resulting data, presented below, paints a more detailed picture of homelessness in Georgia. These results should not be taken as representative of the entire state, but only of the balance of state and Augusta-Richmond Continuum of Care.

Characteristics

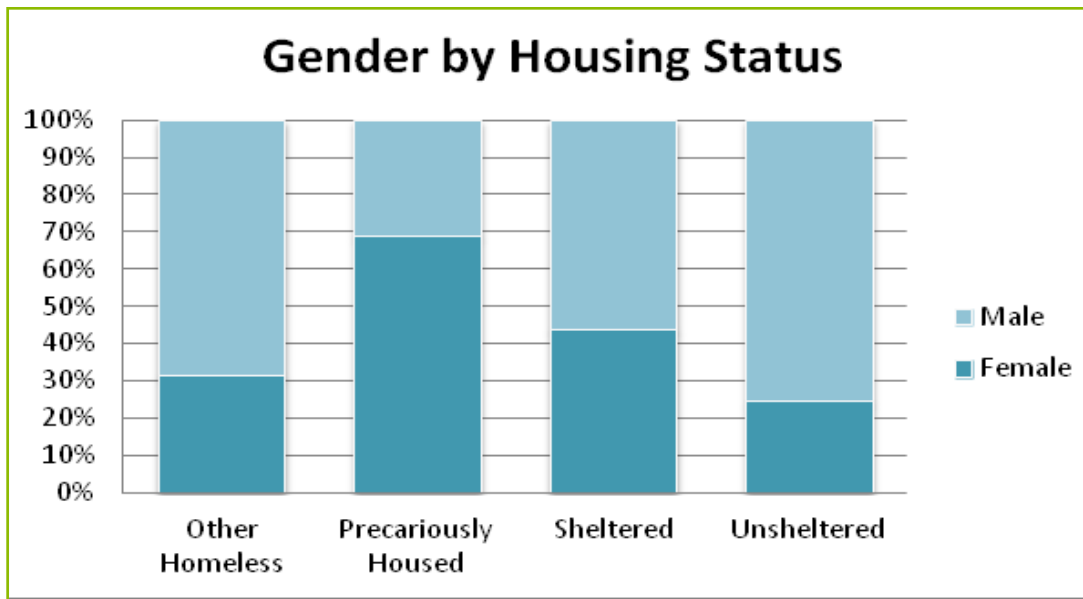
51% of homeless respondents were African American, **42%** were White, and the remaining respondents were Multi-Racial, Native American, or Asian.

The majority of homeless respondents (**93%**) were living in Georgia when they first became homeless.

About **10%** of the homeless respondents were also veterans.

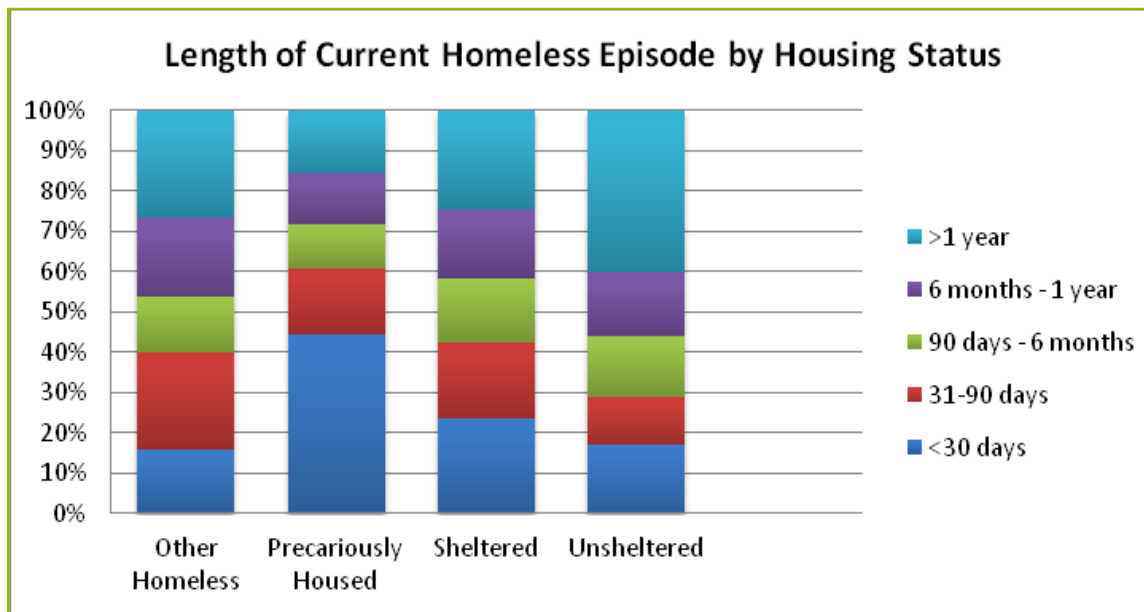


Roughly half of the homeless respondents were sheltered; **29%** of homeless respondents were unsheltered. **14%** were precariously housed, meaning that they were facing loss of their housing within two weeks or staying in dilapidated housing. The remaining **8%** were either in jail, a hospital, or a detox program, but would otherwise have been homeless.

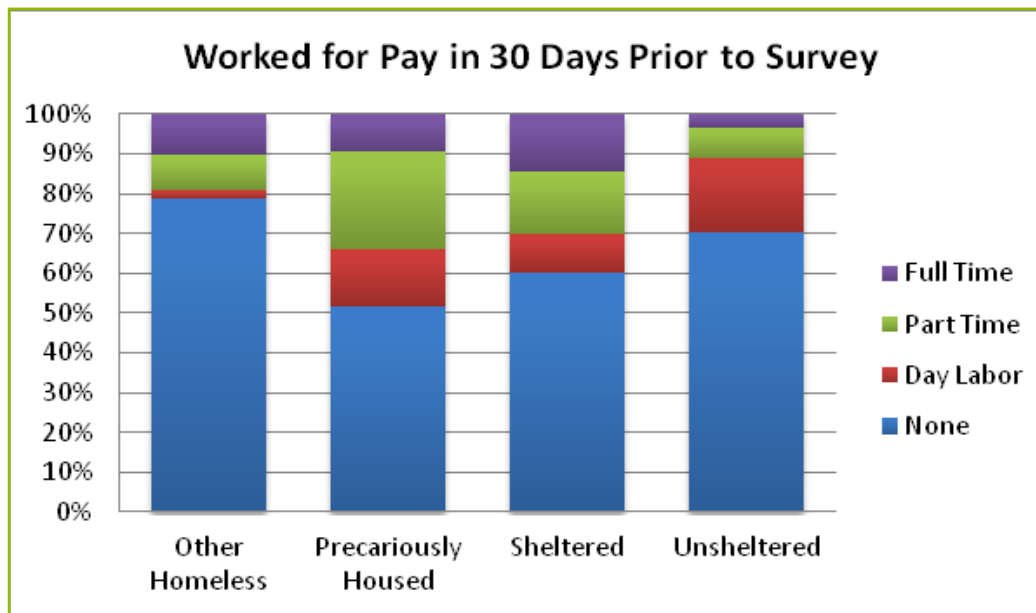


Length of Homeless Episode

One objective of homeless programs is to make episodes of homelessness as short as possible. Typically, the longer an individual or family is homeless, the more services and support they will need to become stably housed. **32%** of survey respondents who were classified as homeless had been homeless less than three months. **24%** of survey respondents who were homeless had been homeless more than a year.

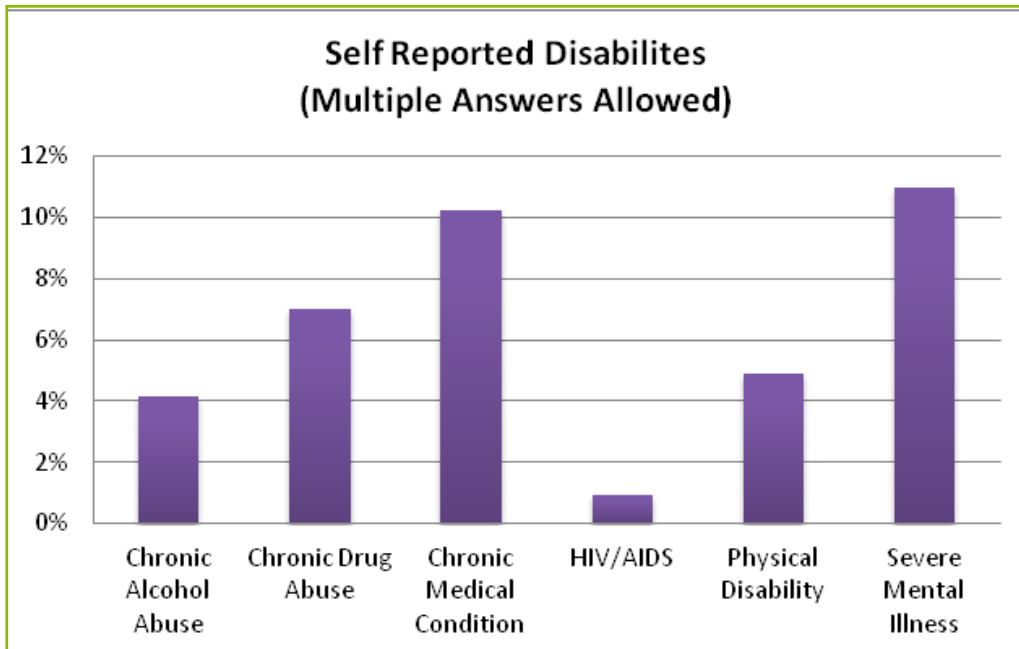


Employment, Disability and Mainstream Benefits



About **38%** of survey respondents indicated that they had at least one disability. These disabilities included chronic medical conditions, physical disabilities, HIV/AIDS, mental illness, and addictive diseases.

A disproportionate number of individuals with mental illness and addictive diseases are homeless. Georgia's Department of Behavioral Health and Development Disabilities (DBHDD) reported that 4,015 homeless persons accessed mental health services in FY2013. Of these, 3,902 were adults and 113 were children.



Extremely low incomes, coupled with high rates of disability, make medical care a significant cost associated with homelessness. **36%** of survey respondents categorized as homeless indicated that they had been to the hospital emergency room in the past six months.

Mainstream benefits are federal and state programs that generally target people who live in poverty or have a disability. Many people who are homeless qualify for these benefits. However, applying for and receiving them can be difficult for the homeless population.

Self Reported Benefits/Services Received (Multiple Answers Allowed)

Benefit	Percent of Respondents
Food Stamps	53.0%
Social Security SSI	2.6%
SSI	2.3%
Medicaid	2.3%
Disability	1.9%
PeachCare	1.5%
Unemployment	1.0%
Mental health or addiction services	1.0%
Veterans Benefits	0.8%
Homelessness Prevention	0.3%
TANF	0.3%
Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8)	0.1%
Workman's Comp	0.1%
DBHDD Georgia Housing Voucher	0.0%
DHS Independent Living Services (ILP)	0.0%
Rapid Re-Housing	0.0%
Veterans Supportive Housing Voucher (VASH)	0.0%

Characteristics of Persons entered into HMIS

The Georgia Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) collects information on Georgia's homeless population. HMIS is a data collection system designed to track services and housing provided throughout the state. Georgia's HMIS is a statewide system that uses Pathways COMPASS.

Georgia's HMIS shows that, statewide, 2,667 persons stayed in emergency shelters and 3,018 persons stayed in transitional housing in FY2013.

FY2013 HMIS Records

	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing
Total Number of Residents	2,667	3,018
Female	1,236 (46%)	1,199 (40%)
Under 18	450 (17%)	724 (24%)
55 and older	346 (13%)	326(11%)
Veteran	215(8%)	450 (15%)
With a Disability	755 (28%)	1,148 (38%)

Responding to the Need

Because homelessness is a consequence of poverty, its solutions must include affordable housing, along with employment or mainstream benefits sufficient to maintain housing stability. When disabilities put people at risk for continued or recurring homelessness, outreach and services play a crucial part in getting them into housing and helping them stay there. For many families and individuals, homelessness prevention is the best answer to the problem.

Housing

The goal of programs that serve homeless families and individuals is permanent, stable housing. The path to that goal may be directly from homelessness into independent housing – a path reflected in housing programs that use the “rapid re-housing” or “housing first” model. Other people will move from homelessness into an emergency shelter that provides basic housing and services for a very limited period of time. Transitional housing provides housing, case management, and services for up to 24 months, with the goal of moving participants into permanent housing. Emergency and transitional housing for victims of domestic violence is reported separately from other housing resources, as these beds are reserved for a specific client group.

Permanent Supportive Housing is a successful, cost-effective combination of affordable housing and services that helps people live more stable, productive lives. Supportive housing works well for people who face the most complex challenges—individuals and families who are not only homeless, but who also have serious, persistent disabilities and very low incomes.

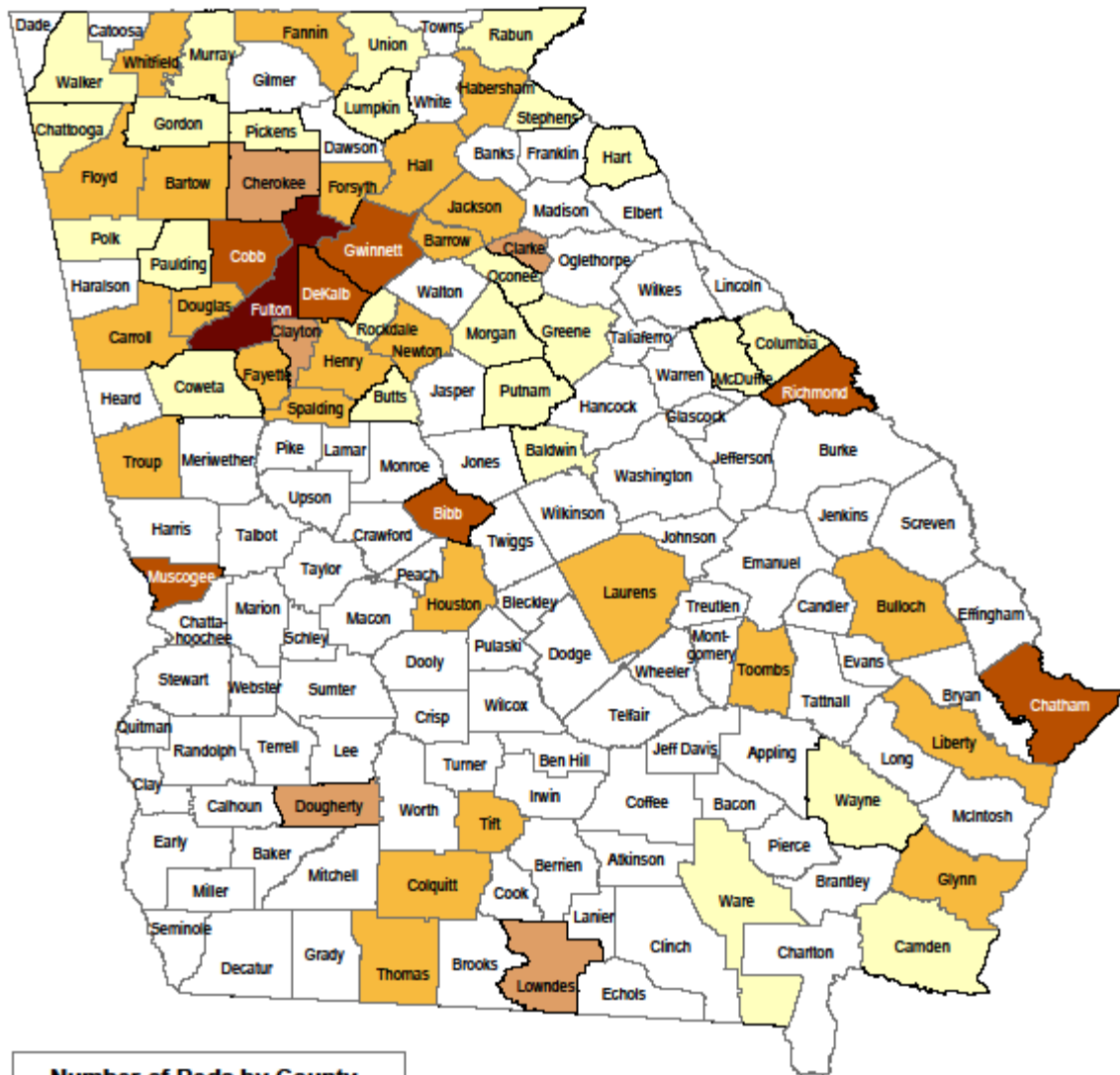
In Georgia, there are 17,151 beds designated for homeless persons.

Statewide Bed Inventory for 2009 through 2013

Housing Type	Number of Beds by Year		
	2009	2011	2013
Emergency Shelter and Transitional Housing	8,831	10,508	10,221
Permanent Supportive Housing	4,608	5,558	6,930
Total	13,439	16,066	17,151

2013 Statewide Report on Homelessness

Emergency and Transitional Beds



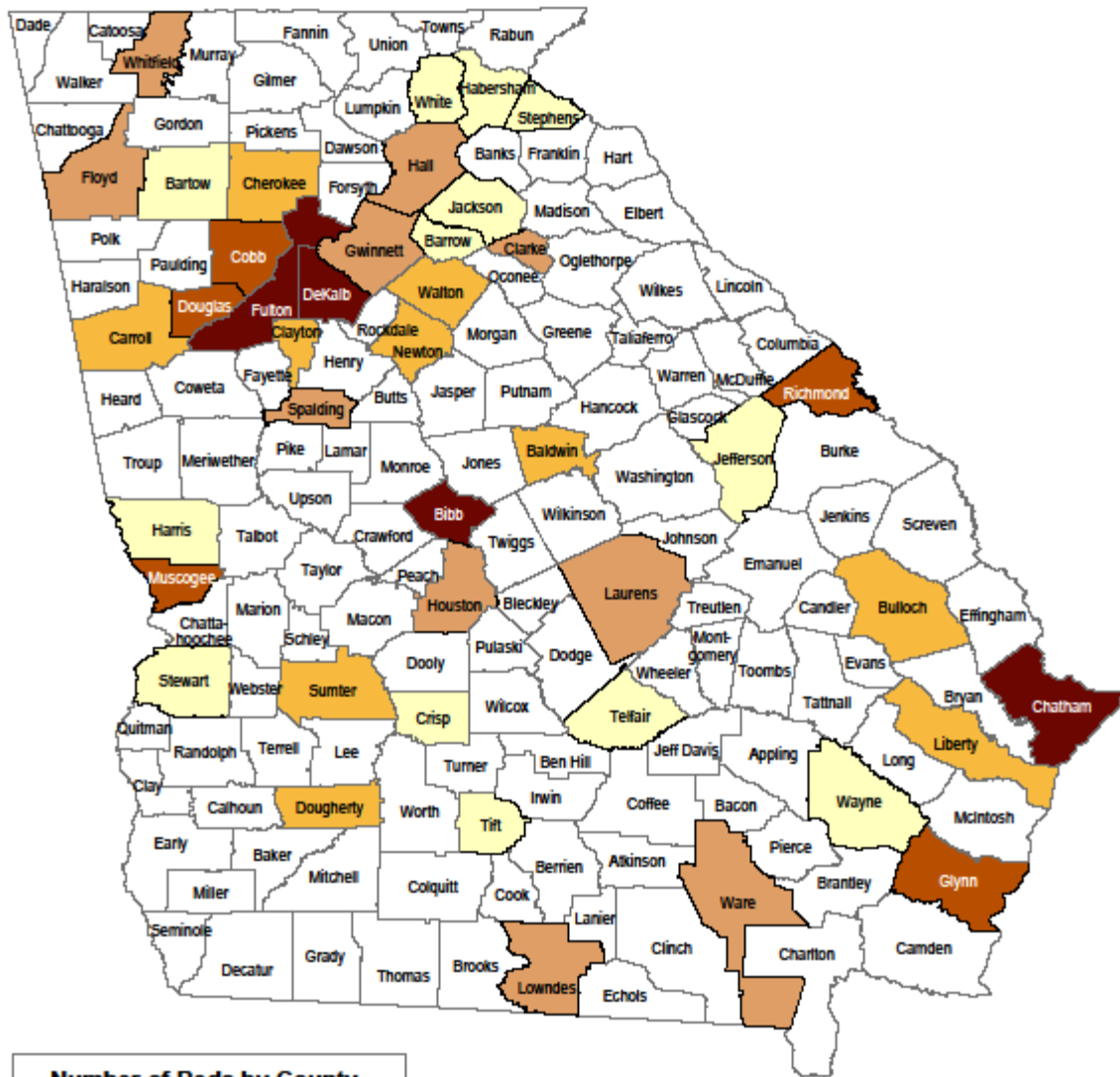
	0		101 - 200
	1 - 25		201 - 700
	26 - 100		701 - 4643

Source: 2013 Continuum of Care Housing Inventories
 This map reflects circumstances on the night of January 28, 2013.



2013 Statewide Report on Homelessness

Permanent Supportive Housing Beds



Number of Beds by County

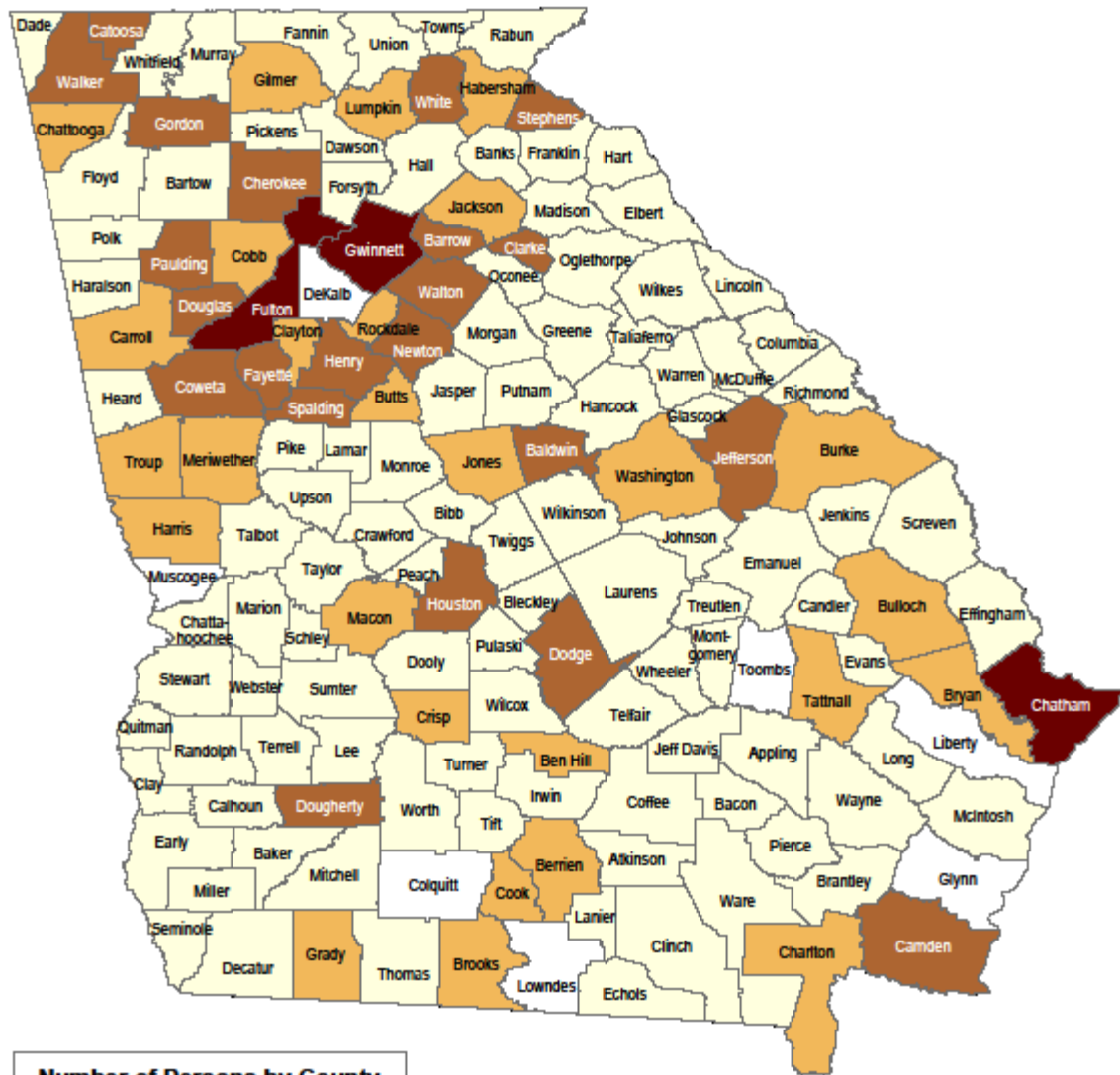
	0		51 - 150
	1 - 25		151 - 300
	26 - 50		301 - 2104

Source: 2013 Continuum of Care Housing Inventories
 This map reflects circumstances on the night of January 28, 2013.



2013 Statewide Report on Homelessness

Point-in-Time Estimate of Unmet Needs



Number of Persons by County

	0		51 - 150
	1 - 25		151 - 1157
	26 - 50		

Source: 2013 Continuum of Care Housing Inventories
 Unmet Needs: Total unsheltered homeless persons minus total empty beds (Emergency, Transitional, and Permanent Supportive)
 This map reflects circumstances on the night of January 28, 2013.



Not surprisingly, these beds are concentrated in the state's most urban areas. Taking into account homeless program beds that were empty on the point-in-time night, a comparison of the homeless count to the number of beds available indicates that Georgia needs at least 6,010 additional beds statewide to guarantee shelter or temporary housing space for the unsheltered. The unmet shelter needs map provides a more precise picture, showing large portions of the state's rural areas where virtually all of the shelter need is unmet. In addition to the unmet shelter needs shown on the map, there are people residing in institutions who may need permanent supportive housing in order to live independently.

Comparing the point-in-time (single night) count of sheltered homeless persons to the bed inventory shows that on count night 86% of the available beds were in use.

Domestic Violence Shelters

3,851 adults and 3,861 children were provided with shelter at one of 46 Department of Human Services certified Domestic Violence Agencies in FY2013. At least 4,020 additional requests by domestic violence victims for shelter were denied during this period due to lack of shelter space.¹

Emergency Shelters

Emergency shelters and outreach to unsheltered populations are the shelter entry points for thousands of persons who have become homeless. In FY2013, through 74 project grants, DCA assisted in providing 2,004 beds in emergency shelter facilities, expending \$1,384,430 to assist those in need of emergency housing. A total of 15,493 persons were housed by DCA-funded shelter programs this year. This number includes 4,680 children and 954 veterans.

Transitional Housing

In FY2013, through 51 grants, DCA assisted in providing 1,536 beds in transitional housing facilities, with an average of 1,096 clients receiving housing per day. A total of 2,796 persons were housed by DCA-funded transitional programs this year. Of this total, 1,248 children and 142 veterans were provided with transitional housing.

Supportive Services

In addition to housing, DCA awards funds to organizations that provide services designed to address issues that may contribute to homelessness. The range of supportive services available through provider programs included housing support services, outreach, case management, childcare, employment training, financial counseling, legal aid, mental health counseling, health care, and substance abuse therapy. In FY2013, through 21 project grants, a total of 13,655 persons from 11,340 households received supportive services through this program.

² This number may represent duplicate individuals.

Shelter Plus Care (S+C)

The Shelter Plus Care program is designed to provide housing and supportive services on a long-term basis for homeless persons with disabilities and their families. There are 69 current projects with 1,645 units under contract. 25 programs are operating in a five-year grant period while 44 programs are operating in a renewal term for a 12-month period. In FY2013 the programs benefited an estimated 2,228 individuals or heads of families who were homeless and had a disability.

Rapid Re-Housing

Rapid Re-Housing funds help households experiencing homelessness move directly into housing of their own in the community. In FY2013, DCA assisted 1,879 individuals in 770 households totaling \$2.9 million for housing relocation and stabilization services, such as case management and support services, in addition to rental and utility assistance.

Homelessness Prevention

Homelessness Prevention funds target individuals and families who are currently in housing but need temporary assistance to prevent them from moving into emergency shelters or living in places not meant for human habitation. In FY2013, DCA assisted 640 individuals in 223 households totaling \$457,100 for housing relocation and stabilization services, such as case management and support services, in addition to rental and utility assistance.

Street Outreach

Street Outreach is conducted when agencies canvas the community to locate and provide services to unsheltered individuals and families or those who are living in places not meant for human habitation, such as the streets, parks, and abandoned buildings. Agencies build relationships with households in order to provide immediate support and connect households to other homeless services. In FY2013, 854 individuals from 785 households received street outreach services.

Georgia Interagency Homeless Coordination Council

The Homeless Task Force engages in multi-organizational state and local partnerships focused on addressing issues relating to homelessness, and ultimately on eliminating homelessness altogether. Among these efforts are the State Homeless Interagency Coordination Council, a collaboration with the Metropolitan Atlanta Regional Homeless Commission.

Special Thanks

The 2013 housing stability count would not have been possible without the efforts of many people and organizations across the state.

Katie Arce

Georgia Department of Community Affairs

Carlos Baker

Chatham-Savannah Authority for the Homeless

Kimberly Blanchard

Coordinated Health Services, Inc.

Carolyn Bridges

The Center for Family Resources

Belinda Brown

Augusta-Richmond County

Suzu Bus

Gwinnett Coalition for Health and Human Services

Samanta Carvalho

Unified Government of Athens-Clarke County

Kerrie Davis

Southwest Georgia Regional Commission

Elizabeth Dillard-Alcantara

Homeless Resource Network, Inc.

Marlena Dixon

CSB of Middle Georgia

Tyler Driver

The Extension

Daniel Evans

Augusta-Richmond County

Johnny Fambro

Macon Coalition to End Homelessness

Targie Folds

Greene County Board of Education

Scott Gaither

City of Covington

Rhonda Greene

Augusta-Richmond County

Ryan Halsey

Advantage Behavioral Health Systems

Rev. James Ham

Missions for Camden

Suzanne Harbin

Whitfield Family Connection

Kathy Hart

HODAC

Shawn Howell

Ninth District Opportunity, Inc.

Phillip Hunter

United Way Atlanta

Ladrina Jones

MUST Ministries

Daisy Jones

City of Hinesville

Barbara Meyers

Gateway Behavioral Health Services

Rev. Bob Milburn

MUST Ministries

Jessica Mitcham

Good Neighbor Homeless Shelter

Daniel "Ed" Moore

The Bigger Vision of Athens, Inc.

Tina Moore

Georgia Department of Community Affairs

Ilona Nagy

Concerted Services

Loretta North

Carrollton Housing Authority

Catherine Owens

United Way of Cobb

Sabrina Paige

Augusta-Richmond County

Dr. Josie Parker

Pathways Community Network Institute, Inc.

Frances Phillips

Faith Community Development Services

Dr. Jennifer Priestley

Kennesaw State University

Jason Rodriguez

Georgia Department of Community Affairs

Joan Stoddard

United Way of CSRA

Christy Storey

Kennesaw State University

Kelly Strozier

South Georgia Partnership to End Homelessness

Lynda Suarez

CSRA Economic Opportunity Authority

Michelle Thompson

AVITA Community Partners

Kelly Trapanier

Kennesaw State University

Paul Vaughn

Kennesaw State University

Capt. Mike Wilson

Chatham-Savannah Metropolitan Police Department

Appendix A

The Homeless Count Requirement and Methodology Congressionally Mandated Data Collection – Homeless Counts and HMIS

In order to better respond to homelessness in America, Congress has incorporated data collection requirements into the McKinney-Vento Act's programs for the homeless. The hope is that through data collection, progress toward eliminating homelessness can be tracked and programs can be tailored to better meet the need. Through amendments to the McKinney Vento Act and by HUD regulation, the nation's homeless service providers must:

1. Adopt a Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). HMIS is a person-level data collection system on people who access homeless services.¹
2. Conduct a regular homeless census. Point-in-time homeless counts must be conducted during the last ten days of January in odd years (January 2011, 2013, and so on).

A homeless census consists of counting both sheltered and unsheltered homeless persons.

- A count of sheltered homeless people is comprised of those who occupy emergency shelters, transitional housing, recovery programs that serve homeless and non-homeless clients, and motels if motel vouchers are provided by a service agency. The goal for the sheltered count is for the data to ultimately come from HMIS.
- A count of unsheltered homeless people is comprised of those who reside in places not meant for human habitation, such as on the streets, in vehicles, parks, sidewalks, abandoned buildings, and makeshift shelters such as tents.

As a result of data requirements placed on the Continuums of Care, HUD is now able to issue an annual assessment of homelessness to Congress. In the most recent assessment, the *2013 Annual Assessment Report to Congress*², HUD estimated that 610,042 people across the country were on the streets, in emergency shelters, or in transitional housing programs on a single night in January of that year.

Georgia's Homeless Counts

In response to the mandates described above, each of Georgia's seven Continuums of Care is engaged in an effort to count their jurisdiction's sheltered and unsheltered homeless population. Although each Continuum has an independent responsibility to meet McKinney-Vento data collection requirements, the seven Continuums have been working cooperatively with a single HMIS provider (Pathways Community Network) and share data related to their counts.

Sheltered Homeless Counts

The census of homeless persons and families in shelter is typically done annually, in conjunction with a housing inventory. The housing inventory is an opportunity for each Continuum of Care to track the available housing resources for homeless persons. The goal of each inventory is to account for all housing resources for people that are homeless (emergency shelter, transitional housing, and permanent supportive housing), not just those that are funded by the state or federal government. Each January, the Continuums attempt to collect data from all homeless service providers about the number and type of beds (emergency, transitional, or permanent supportive) provided. Additionally, those service providers are asked to provide information on how many people they had utilizing the beds on a single specified night (sheltered count). Eventually, HMIS will provide this data for all participating service providers, leaving only the independent providers to be surveyed.

Unsheltered Counts

There are two generally accepted methodologies for conducting counts of unsheltered persons.³ The service based method uses surveys collected from persons seeking service. The surveys are generally collected during a one-to two-week period, but focus on a single point-in-time. The other method is the street count or canvassing method that uses a visual count of people sleeping outdoors, in encampments, and in abandoned buildings on a single night. The implementation of these methodologies varies considerably across jurisdictions, and some communities use a hybrid methodology that combines features of each approach.

In Georgia, the locally-based Continuums have typically relied on a street count or canvassing methodology. Athens-Clarke, Cobb, and the Atlanta Tri-Jurisdictional Collaborative have relied exclusively on the canvassing method to obtain their unsheltered counts. The Savannah-Chatham Continuum mostly relied on a canvassing method but also used supplementary surveys to count those who had been hard to locate on the point-in-time night. The Columbus-Muscogee Continuum relied on service-based count. For its 2011 count, the Augusta-Richmond Continuum worked collaboratively with the Balance of State Continuum to conduct a service-based count.

The Georgia Balance of State Continuum of Care covers 152 counties, many of them rural, presenting a significant challenge in conducting the biennial unsheltered count. While DCA was able to conduct a sheltered count to comply with the 2004 count requirement, until 2008 it did not have a feasible way to count unsheltered homeless people in the 152 counties. To meet the federal requirement, estimation techniques based on count data from other jurisdictions were used. Beginning in 2008, DCA has used a sampling methodology and predictive model developed by statistics faculty at Kennesaw State University.⁴ In 2013, the data

used for the model came from survey counts conducted in 75 counties.⁵ Additionally, the model used data from the street counts in the other Continuums. The counts conducted in the Balance of State were done using surveys collected at locations where people receive services and in places where homeless persons are known to congregate and stay.

¹ U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Office of Community Planning and Development. August 2001. *Report to Congress: HUD's Strategy for Homeless Data Collection, Analysis and Reporting.*

² U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Office of Community Planning and Development. November 2013. *The 2013 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress.*

³ U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Office of Community Planning and Development. October 2004. *A Guide to Counting Unsheltered Homeless People.*

⁴ Jennifer Lewis Priestley. May 2008. *Every Georgian Counts: Final Report on Sampling and Modeling.* Kennesaw State University, Department of Mathematics and Statistics.

⁵ Jennifer Lewis Priestley. June 2013. *Every Georgian Counts: 2013 Estimates of Homelessness in Georgia (Revised).* Kennesaw State University, Center for Statistics and Analytical Services.

Appendix B

Homeless Population and Shelter Beds

2013 Point-in-Time Bed Inventories, Sheltered Counts, and Unsheltered Estimates

COUNTY	<i>Sheltered Homeless Persons (Emergency and Transitional Housing)</i>	<i>Unsheltered Homeless Persons (Counts and Predictive Model)</i>	<i>Total Homeless Persons</i>	<i>Total Emergency and Transitional Beds</i>
APPLING	0	16	16	0
ATKINSON	0	2	2	0
BACON	0	14	14	0
BAKER	0	12	12	0
BALDWIN	11	71	82	12
BANKS	0	14	14	0
BARROW	60	81	141	66
BARTOW	50	35	85	66
BEN HILL	0	32	32	0
BERRIEN	0	28	28	0
BIBB	245	67	312	289
BLECKLEY	0	23	23	0
BRANTLEY	0	20	20	0
BROOKS	0	29	29	0
BRYAN	0	35	35	0
BULLOCH	47	47	94	52
BURKE	0	28	28	0
BUTTS	5	33	38	5
CALHOUN	0	13	13	0
CAMDEN	9	81	90	18
CANDLER	0	22	22	0
CARROLL	63	59	122	62
CATOOSA	0	73	73	0
CHARLTON	0	27	27	0
CHATHAM	543	622	1165	678
CHATTAHOOCHEE	0	16	16	0
CHATTOOGA	11	41	52	11
CHEROKEE	182	160	342	188
CLARKE	118	95	213	149
CLAY	0	7	7	0

COUNTY	Sheltered Homeless Persons (Emergency and Transitional Housing)	Unsheltered Homeless Persons (Counts and Predictive Model)	Total Homeless Persons	Total Emergency and Transitional Beds
CLAYTON	123	130	253	200
CLINCH	0	9	9	0
COBB	351	144	495	415
COFFEE	0	21	21	0
COLQUITT	51	9	60	73
COLUMBIA	3	5	8	3
COOK	0	32	32	0
COWETA	19	94	113	21
CRAWFORD	0	20	20	0
CRISP	0	29	29	0
DADE	0	24	24	0
DAWSON	0	4	4	0
DECATUR	0	17	17	0
DEKALB	491	214	705	603
DODGE	0	55	55	0
DOOLY	0	21	21	0
DOUGHERTY	63	106	169	109
DOUGLAS	66	120	186	80
EARLY	0	17	17	0
ECHOLS	0	13	13	0
EFFINGHAM	0	4	4	0
ELBERT	0	24	24	0
EMANUEL	0	18	18	0
EVANS	0	15	15	0
FANNIN	17	26	43	30
FAYETTE	25	68	93	31
FLOYD	47	110	157	68
FORSYTH	22	33	55	30
FRANKLIN	0	4	4	0
FULTON	4096	1863	5959	4622
GILMER	0	38	38	0
GLASCOCK	0	2	2	0
GLYNN	38	42	80	49

COUNTY	<i>Sheltered Homeless Persons (Emergency and Transitional Housing)</i>	<i>Unsheltered Homeless Persons (Counts and Predictive Model)</i>	<i>Total Homeless Persons</i>	<i>Total Emergency and Transitional Beds</i>
GORDON	20	60	80	20
GRADY	0	34	34	0
GREENE	4	10	14	12
GWINNETT	326	684	1010	378
HABERSHAM	64	32	96	65
HALL	43	14	57	48
HANCOCK	0	20	20	0
HARALSON	0	24	24	0
HARRIS	0	28	28	0
HART	8	23	31	8
HEARD	0	17	17	0
HENRY	35	123	158	39
HOUSTON	38	132	170	75
IRWIN	0	12	12	0
JACKSON	39	48	87	39
JASPER	0	13	13	0
JEFF DAVIS	0	18	18	0
JEFFERSON	0	51	51	0
JENKINS	0	10	10	0
JOHNSON	0	17	17	0
JONES	0	27	27	0
LAMAR	0	17	17	0
LANIER	0	13	13	0
LAURENS	19	28	47	30
LEE	0	22	22	0
LIBERTY	74	16	90	85
LINCOLN	0	4	4	0
LONG	0	17	17	0
LOWNDES	89	36	125	115
LUMPKIN	10	29	39	12
MACON	0	31	31	0
MADISON	0	22	22	0
MARION	0	23	23	0

COUNTY	<i>Sheltered Homeless Persons (Emergency and Transitional Housing)</i>	<i>Unsheltered Homeless Persons (Counts and Predictive Model)</i>	<i>Total Homeless Persons</i>	<i>Total Emergency and Transitional Beds</i>
MCDUFFIE	4	16	20	4
MCINTOSH	0	13	13	0
MERIWETHER	0	41	41	0
MILLER	0	8	8	0
MITCHELL	0	2	2	0
MONROE	0	22	22	0
MONTGOMERY	0	16	16	0
MORGAN	4	17	21	4
MURRAY	5	4	9	5
MUSCOGEE	234	60	294	362
NEWTON	31	85	116	65
OCONEE	4	25	29	5
OGLETHORPE	0	18	18	0
PAULDING	14	84	98	21
PEACH	0	17	17	0
PICKENS	7	23	30	7
PIERCE	0	7	7	0
PIKE	0	17	17	0
POLK	5	30	35	14
PULASKI	0	18	18	0
PUTNAM	5	17	22	5
QUITMAN	0	3	3	0
RABUN	10	9	19	12
RANDOLPH	0	11	11	0
RICHMOND	330	135	465	449
ROCKDALE	20	41	61	20
SCHLEY	0	7	7	0
SCREVEN	0	18	18	0
SEMINOLE	0	12	12	0
SPALDING	26	90	116	32
STEPHENS	8	60	68	9
STEWART	0	12	12	0
SUMTER	0	23	23	0

COUNTY	Sheltered Homeless Persons (Emergency and Transitional Housing)	Unsheltered Homeless Persons (Counts and Predictive Model)	Total Homeless Persons	Total Emergency and Transitional Beds
TALBOT	0	10	10	0
TALIAFERRO	0	7	7	0
TATTNALL	0	37	37	0
TAYLOR	0	13	13	0
TELFAIR	0	19	19	0
TERRELL	0	15	15	0
THOMAS	35	26	61	53
TIFT	56	29	85	68
TOOMBS	72	3	75	80
TOWNS	0	5	5	0
TREUTLEN	0	14	14	0
TROUP	21	39	60	26
TURNER	0	9	9	0
TWIGGS	0	12	12	0
UNION	14	17	31	15
UPSON	0	24	24	0
WALKER	12	63	75	18
WALTON	0	92	92	0
WARE	9	19	28	14
WARREN	0	9	9	0
WASHINGTON	0	36	36	0
WAYNE	12	24	36	12
WEBSTER	0	6	6	0
WHEELER	0	9	9	0
WHITE	0	60	60	0
WHITFIELD	34	68	102	65
WILCOX	0	11	11	0
WILKES	0	10	10	0
WILKINSON	0	11	11	0
WORTH	0	2	2	0
STATE TOTAL	8,497	8,449	16,946	10,221

Based on 2013 Continuum of Care Housing Inventory and 2013 Homeless Count and Predictive Model

Glossary

Adult: A person who is 18 years of age or older.

Bed: A means of providing shelter for one individual. This includes literal beds, but it can also include hotel/motel vouchers. For hotel/motel voucher programs, the number of “beds” is simply the number of people served on the point-in-time (PIT) night.

Bed utilization: The percentage of beds that were occupied on the point-in-time (PIT) night. This is calculated by dividing the total person PIT count by the total bed count.

Child: A person younger than 18 years of age.

Chronic household: According to HUD, this is a household that has at least one adult member who (a) has a disabling condition and (b) has either been continually homeless for at least a year or has been homeless at least 4 times in the past 3 years.

Chronic individual: According to HUD, this is an adult who (a) has a disabling condition and (b) has either been continually homeless for at least a year, or has been homeless at least 4 times in the past 3 years.

Geo Code: A geographic code designated for a county or city.

HH: An abbreviation for “household.”

HMIS: Georgia’s Homeless Management Information System, run by Pathways Community Network Institute, Inc.

Household: This refers to a group of people who enroll in a program together, but it can also refer to an unaccompanied individual (an individual who enrolls alone). For example, if 25 unaccompanied persons are enrolled in a program, that means 25 “households” are enrolled. Another example: If 12 families, 2 couples, and 5 unaccompanied individuals enrolled in a program, then $12 + 2 + 5 = 19$ households are enrolled.

Household with at least one adult and one child: A group of people who enroll in a program together, who are also composed of one or more adults and one or more children. For example, the following households fall under this category: A mother and her 2 children; an adult couple and their 1 child; a grandmother and her 5 grandchildren; a group of two brothers, a sister-in-law, and a child; etc.

Household with only children: A group of people composed entirely of children or an unaccompanied child. This type of household can include a 17-year-old mother with her child, a 16-year-old and her 7-year-old brother, an 8-year-old boy who enrolls in the program alone, etc.

Household without children: A group of people composed entirely of adults or an unaccompanied adult. This type of household can include a 45-year-old unaccompanied man; a boyfriend and girlfriend in their 20s; a 63-year-old woman with her 45-year-old daughter and 18 year-old grandson, etc.

Housing inventory count (HIC): A tally of homeless beds across different emergency shelter, transitional housing, rapid re-housing, and permanent supportive housing programs. This count is required by HUD to take place once a year.

HUD: The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

McKinney-Vento: In 1987, Congress passed the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, which allocates federal money for homelessness programs. If an entity receives any Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG), Supportive Housing Program (SHP), or Shelter Plus Care (SPC) funding, then it is a beneficiary of McKinney-Vento.

New Inventory: Beds/units that were not available as of January 31, 2014. These would be beds/units that were fully funded but did not physically exist at a shelter as of January 31, 2014.

Overflow bed: An emergency shelter bed that is only available when all other shelters are at capacity.

Point-in-time count: A one-night tally of homeless persons staying in emergency shelter and transitional housing programs (to the exclusion of permanent supportive housing programs, unlike the HIC) and homeless persons who are unsheltered. HUD requires sheltered PIT counts at least once a year and unsheltered PIT counts at least once every two years. Both counts always take place on one night during the last week of January (e.g., January 27, 2014).

Ppl: An abbreviation for “people” or “persons.”

Target population A: A population is considered a “target population” if a program is designed to serve that population and at least three-fourths of the clients served by the program fits that target population description. HUD has provided specific categories to choose from: single males, single females, single males & females, couples only (no children), households with children, single males & households with children, single females & households with children, single males & females + households with children, unaccompanied males under 18 years old, unaccompanied females under 18 years old, and unaccompanied males & females under 18 years old. If none of these fit, “none of these” or “unsure” is the correct response.

Target population B: A population is considered a “target population” if a program is designed to serve that population and at least three-fourths of the clients served by the program fits that target population description. HUD has provided specific categories to choose from: domestic violence victims, veterans, and persons with HIV/AIDS. If none of these fit, “none of these” or “unsure” is the correct response.

Under Development: Beds/units that were not available as of January 31, 2014. These would be beds/units that were fully funded but did not physically exist at a shelter as of January 31, 2014.

Unit: A single bed or a collection of beds designed for one household and one household only. Examples include: A room containing 3 mats and reserved for one household; an apartment containing 2 rooms and 5 beds, but limited to one household; a single bed designed for one unaccompanied individual; etc. This can be a little confusing for shelters that have multiple unaccompanied individuals and/or other households confined to one large living space... In this case, the number of units is simply the number of beds available (e.g., if there are 100 beds then there are also 100 “units” in this type of shelter).

Veteran: Someone who has served on active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States. This does not include inactive military reserves or the National Guard unless the person was called up to active duty. (Note: “activated” is receiving orders to go into combat or to serve stateside.)



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Center for Statistics
and Analytical Services

Every Georgian Counts

2013 Estimates of Homelessness in Georgia (Revised)

Prepared by Jennifer Lewis Priestley, Ph.D.

Kennesaw State University

June, 2013

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Executive Summary

Using demographic and econometric data from the 2013 Georgia County Guide, as well as the results of research provided by organizations from across the State, the current study provides an estimate of the number of homeless persons in the State of Georgia for each of the 159 counties. From the *2011 Report on Homelessness*, the previous estimate of unsheltered homeless in the state of Georgia, was 11,366 persons, based on a state population of 9,829,211 (2009 population estimate from the *Georgia County Guide*). The percent of the state population previously estimated to be unsheltered homeless was .1156%. The current estimate of unsheltered homeless is lower at 8,492 persons, based upon the most recent state population estimate of 9,919,945 (2012 population estimate from the *Georgia County Guide*). The percent of the state population currently estimated to be unsheltered homeless is .086%.

The estimated number of individuals precariously housed in Georgia is 4,047, which is .04% of the population.

Together, the number of unsheltered and precariously housed individuals in Georgia is estimated to be 12,538, which is .13% of the population.

Consistent with previous years, the primary demographic and economic variables found to explain homelessness in Georgia included Percent of Population Native Born (negatively related), Property Crime Rate, Arrests, Poverty Rate and Child Abuse Cases (positively related). It should be noted that these factors are “co-present” with homelessness (either negatively or positively) and are not represented as “causing” homelessness.

Introduction

In 2003, the U.S. Congress mandated that every state provide a homeless census every two years to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The State of Georgia, through the Department of Community Affairs (DCA), responded to this mandate by using homeless estimates based on local counts and national studies. Even after the mandate had been in place for three years, Georgia's Balance of State 2007 Continuum of Care Plan continued to rely on very simplistic estimations based upon anecdotal information (Georgia Department of Community Affairs, 2008).

Grappling with the count mandate for the balance of the state was daunting – not only was the sheer size of the state geography an obstacle, but in addition many of the counties covered by the Balance of State Continuum had few homeless service providers. The absence of service providers meant that in many counties there was not a local organizational infrastructure to conduct counts, and a full state count conducted by state employees or contractors looked to be prohibitively expensive. Consequently, counting the homeless population in Georgia seemed an almost Herculean task — a physical census was financially impossible and would have almost assuredly resulted in an undercount. After investigating count approaches used by large locally-based continuums, DCA staff determined that some type of inferential modeling approach would be necessary.

The current report provides the fourth estimate of homelessness in Georgia (previous estimates were developed in 2008, 2009 and 2011) using a combination of point-in-time counts, survey-based data and inferential modeling techniques. The methodology used to develop the current estimates will be explained, followed by the results and a discussion of the limitations and challenges of an inferential approach to homeless enumeration. It should be noted that the current version of the modeling methodology represents a refinement of the previous years' estimates, based upon input from individual county organizers. These refinements will be explained in the Methodology section below.

Methodology

The estimates for counts of unsheltered homeless individuals, and precariously housed individuals by county have been derived from a combination of point-in-time counts as well as survey initiatives across 84 counties. The estimates for the Balance of State, were developed using inferential modeling.

The inferential modeling process utilized data extracted from the 2013 Georgia County Guide. After reviewing the available demographic and economic variables, a total of 26 variables were selected for use in the modeling exercise. All variables included data reflecting 2010 or 2011 information. Variable selections were based upon previous experience with the data, assessment of the variables as potential predictors of unsheltered homelessness, up-to-date information and previous predictive value. The selected predictors came from following areas: economic, courts and crime, education, government, health, housing, labor, public assistance, and vital statistics. Where needed, variables were scaled and/or standardized to facilitate direct comparisons among counties.

An ordinary least squares regression model was developed, using percentage or rate of unsheltered homeless within the single population by county as the dependent variable. The rate of unsheltered homeless, instead of actual counts of unsheltered homeless persons, has always been utilized to remove the effects of population size. In the current methodology, the rate was based upon the single population rather than on the total population. This change was made based upon input from experts from Pathways and from the DeKalb County organization. The rationale being that homeless people come, primarily, from the population of single people – not people living in family units. Once the rates of unsheltered homeless are predicted for each county, the result is then multiplied by the current population to determine the estimated count for counties where counts were not provided.

All analysis was executed using BASE SAS version 9.3.

Results

The final inferential model included six variables found to be significant predictors of unsheltered homelessness. These variables, included the percentage of the gross tax digest coming from mobile homes and agriculture, the percentage of the population identified as having a mental illness, the property crime rate, the rate of child abuse and the percentage of the population which was native born.

The model generated an adjusted R^2 value of about 61%, meaning that 61% of the change or variation in the rate of homelessness by county has been captured using a linear combination of the variables listed above.

The current overall rate of unsheltered homelessness for the State of Georgia is estimated to be .085%. Based on a population of 9,919,945 ¹, the current estimated count of unsheltered homelessness in the state of Georgia is 8,492 persons. This estimate represents a substantive decrease from the 2011 estimate of 11,366. Potential reasons for this decrease are provided in the next section.

The 10 counties with the lowest estimated rate of unsheltered homelessness and the highest estimated rate of unsheltered homelessness can be found in Table 1 below.

¹ 2012 population estimate from the 2013 Georgia County Guide.

Table 1: Lowest and Highest Estimated Rate of Unsheltered Homelessness by County

COUNTIES WITH THE LOWEST ESTIMATED RATE OF UNSHELTERED HOMELESSNESS			
COUNTY	2012 POPULATION	FINAL COUNT	EFFECTIVE RATE
COLUMBIA	131,627	5	0.00380%
EFFINGHAM	53,293	4	0.00751%
HALL	185,416	14	0.00755%
MITCHELL	23,144	2	0.00864%
WORTH	21,741	2	0.00920%
MURRAY	39,392	4	0.01015%
TOOMBS	27,315	3	0.01098%
FORSYTH	187,928	33	0.01756%
DAWSON	22,422	4	0.01784%
FRANKLIN	21,894	4	0.01827%
COUNTIES WITH THE HIGHEST ESTIMATED RATE OF UNSHELTERED HOMELESSNESS			
COUNTY	2012 POPULATION	FINAL COUNT	EFFECTIVE RATE
WHITE	27,556	60	0.21774%
HANCOCK	8,996	20	0.22232%
CHATHAM	276,434	615	0.22248%
CLAY	3,116	7	0.22465%
STEPHENS	25,891	60	0.23174%
DODGE	21,329	55	0.25786%
JEFFERSON	16,432	51	0.31037%
ECHOLS	3,988	13	0.32598%
BAKER	3,366	12	0.35651%
TALIAFERRO	1,680	7	0.41667%
GEORGIA	9,919,945	8,492	0.08560%

A full listing of all the rates and counts for all 159 counties can be found in Appendix 1.

Discussion of Results

There are two points with the present study which should be noted.

The first is the estimated decrease in unsheltered homelessness from 11,366 or .1156% of the population to 8,492 or .086% in the current study. The researcher posits two primary factors for this decrease.

The data used to develop the November 2011 estimates came, primarily from 2009 data sources. In 2009, Georgia, like the rest of the country, was experiencing an intense economic downturn.

During this period, Georgia experienced the worst job loss rate of any state in the country². The unemployment rate for Georgia increased from under 5% in 2008 to over 10% in 2009. The current (1Q13) is 8.6%. Of the 500,000+ people who lost private sector jobs in Georgia over this period, many were employed in lower income positions in the construction and manufacturing sectors or the retail sector³. These dismal economic indicators would create an expectation, which was manifested, of more Georgians experiencing homelessness. In addition, many of the variables used to develop the estimates, utilize econometric data. As a result, while there may have been a truly “high” number of homeless individuals reported in the 2011 study, the estimate may have also been inflated because of the dependence on the econometric data from 2009.

A second potential reason for the lower estimate for 2013, is related to a few of the larger counties, such as Columbia, Hall, Bibb and Lowndes. Specifically, the reported point-in-time counts for these larger population counties are, statistically unusual. As an example, Columbia County (population 131,627) reported a total of 5 homeless individuals, resulting in an effective rate of homelessness of .0038%. It is worth noting that if the state average rate of .086% is applied to Columbia, the estimate would be about 113. Hall, Lowndes, Bibb counties had similarly unexpectedly low rates of homelessness – .007%, .03% and .04%, respectively.

The second point worth noting is in relation to the precariously housed numbers. Precariously housed individuals are defined as people living a house or apartment but who face the loss of their housing within two weeks or who live in substandard/dilapidated housing, or as people living in a hotel or motel who (a) face the loss of their housing within two weeks and (b) are not having their stay paid for by an agency, church, or other service provider. There were limited 2013 values reported for precariously housed individuals. As a result, the ratios of the precariously housed individuals to unsheltered individuals from the 2011 study were used in the present study. Estimates of precariously housed individuals for each county can be found in Appendix 1.

² <http://www.gpb.org/news/2010/07/22/georgia-50th-in-job-losses#>

³ http://www.rdhawan.com/booklets/Ga&ATL_Booklet_Feb11_press.pdf

Limitations

As with previous estimates, the present estimates have limitations and should be received in context.

The most important context to consider when reviewing any numbers related to the enumeration of homeless persons is that the true numbers are not only unknown, but arguably unknowable. While econometric and demographic data are generally agreed upon indicators of trends and patterns of homelessness, prediction counts devoid of error is unrealistic.

Because unsheltered homeless and precariously housed individuals are difficult to count, confidence in some of the “actual” numbers may be low. As a result, the accuracy of the predictions from the model becomes somewhat of a moving target. For example, if the “actual” count for a county is 100 but the model predicted 150 for the county, there is a possibility that, given the characteristics of the county, the count is an under representation of the actual homeless population.

While the estimates in the present study should be understood using the lens of the limitations above, the results still have greater than simply directional value – they represent an improvement over previous generalized estimation methods and anecdotal information.

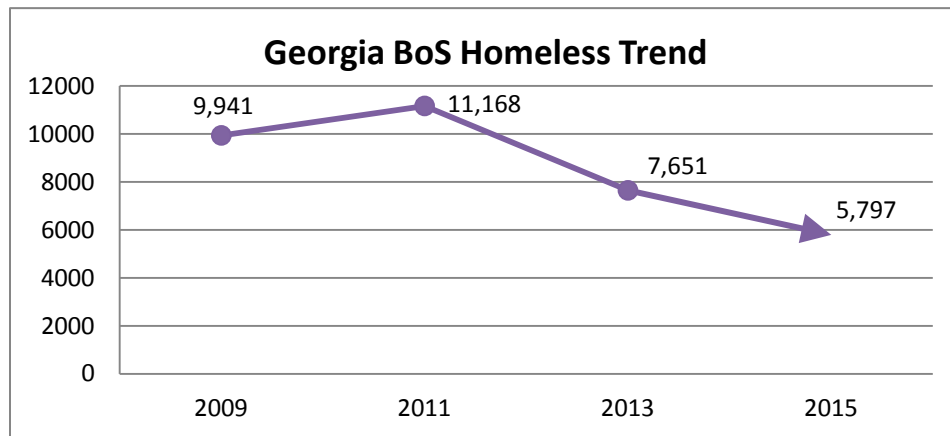
Appendix 1: Unsheltered Homeless and Precariously Housed Counts by County

COUNTY	2012 POPULATION	UNSHelterED HOMELESS COUNT	PERCENT OF POPULATION	PRECARIOUSLY HOUSED COUNT	PERCENT OF POPULATION	TOTAL	PERCENT OF POPULATION
APPLING	18,368	16	0.08711%	15	0.07992%	31	0.16703%
ATKINSON	8,284	2	0.02414%	1	0.01167%	3	0.03582%
BACON	11,198	14	0.12502%	9	0.07990%	23	0.20493%
BAKER	3,366	12	0.35651%	7	0.21022%	19	0.56673%
BALDWIN	46,367	71	0.15313%	11	0.02411%	82	0.17724%
BANKS	18,316	14	0.07644%	3	0.01426%	17	0.09070%
BARROW	70,169	81	0.11544%	36	0.05082%	117	0.16625%
BARTOW	100,661	35	0.03477%	40	0.03979%	75	0.07456%
BEN HILL	17,538	32	0.18246%	22	0.12275%	54	0.30521%
BERRIEN	19,041	28	0.14705%	14	0.07231%	42	0.21936%
BIBB	156,462	67	0.04282%	29	0.01835%	96	0.06117%
BLECKLEY	12,913	23	0.17812%	11	0.08726%	34	0.26537%
BRANTLEY	18,587	20	0.10760%	9	0.05001%	29	0.15761%
BROOKS	15,403	29	0.18828%	10	0.06462%	39	0.25289%
BRYAN	32,214	35	0.10865%	12	0.03861%	47	0.14725%
BULLOCH	72,694	47	0.06465%	9	0.01303%	56	0.07768%
BURKE	23,125	28	0.12108%	6	0.02807%	34	0.14915%
BUTTS	23,524	33	0.14028%	6	0.02632%	39	0.16660%
CALHOUN	6,504	13	0.19988%	7	0.10402%	20	0.30390%
CAMDEN	51,402	81	0.15758%	7	0.01365%	88	0.17123%
CANDLER	11,117	22	0.19790%	12	0.10657%	34	0.30447%
CARROLL	111,580	59	0.05288%	11	0.00988%	70	0.06276%
CATOOSA	65,046	73	0.11223%	24	0.03741%	97	0.14964%
CHARLTON	13,295	27	0.20308%	17	0.12927%	44	0.33236%
CHATHAM	276,434	615	0.22248%	34	0.01215%	649	0.23463%
CHATTAHO	13,037	16	0.12273%	4	0.03040%	20	0.15312%
CHATTOOG	25,725	41	0.15938%	23	0.08788%	64	0.24726%
CHEROKEE	221,315	160	0.07230%	185	0.08351%	345	0.15580%
CLARKE	120,266	93	0.07733%	28	0.02320%	121	0.10053%
CLAY	3,116	7	0.22465%	3	0.09102%	10	0.31567%
CLAYTON	265,888	130	0.04889%	56	0.02088%	186	0.06977%
CLINCH	6,718	9	0.13397%	6	0.08508%	15	0.21905%
COBB	707,442	146	0.02064%	85	0.01204%	231	0.03268%
COFFEE	43,170	21	0.04864%	3	0.00589%	24	0.05453%
COLQUITT	46,137	9	0.01951%	4	0.00869%	13	0.02820%
COLUMBIA	131,627	5	0.00380%	6	0.00458%	11	0.00838%
COOK	16,923	32	0.18909%	15	0.09112%	47	0.28021%
COWETA	130,929	94	0.07179%	44	0.03333%	138	0.10512%
CRAWFORD	12,600	20	0.15873%	10	0.08289%	30	0.24162%
CRISP	23,606	29	0.12285%	6	0.02531%	35	0.14816%
DADE	16,490	24	0.14554%	12	0.07340%	36	0.21894%
DAWSON	22,422	4	0.01784%	2	0.01045%	6	0.02829%
DECATUR	27,509	17	0.06180%	4	0.01301%	21	0.07481%
DEKALB	707,089	214	0.03026%	543	0.07674%	757	0.10701%
DODGE	21,329	55	0.25786%	19	0.08782%	74	0.34568%
DOOLY	14,318	21	0.14667%	10	0.07069%	31	0.21736%
DOUGHERTY	94,501	106	0.11186%	53	0.05591%	159	0.16777%
DOUGLAS	133,971	120	0.08957%	44	0.03290%	164	0.12247%

COUNTY	2012 POPULATION	UNSHelterED HOMELESS COUNT	PERCENT OF POPULATION	PRECARIOUSLY HOUSED COUNT	PERCENT OF POPULATION	TOTAL	PERCENT OF POPULATION
EARLY	10,594	17	0.16047%	14	0.13173%	31	0.29220%
ECHOLS	3,988	13	0.32598%	7	0.17496%	20	0.50094%
EFFINGHAM	53,293	4	0.00751%	1	0.00171%	5	0.00921%
ELBERT	19,684	24	0.12193%	11	0.05516%	35	0.17709%
EMANUEL	22,898	18	0.07861%	19	0.08227%	37	0.16088%
EVANS	10,689	15	0.14033%	7	0.06757%	22	0.20790%
FANNIN	23,492	26	0.11068%	12	0.05107%	38	0.16174%
FAYETTE	107,524	68	0.06324%	29	0.02728%	97	0.09053%
FLOYD	96,177	110	0.11437%	26	0.02733%	136	0.14170%
FORSYTH	187,928	33	0.01756%	16	0.00874%	49	0.02630%
FRANKLIN	21,894	4	0.01827%	1	0.00662%	5	0.02489%
FULTON	977,773	1,863	0.19054%	723	0.07390%	2,586	0.26444%
GILMER	28,190	38	0.13480%	12	0.04293%	50	0.17773%
GLASCOCK	3,142	2	0.06365%	1	0.01764%	3	0.08129%
GLYNN	81,022	42	0.05184%	29	0.03603%	71	0.08787%
GORDON	55,766	60	0.10759%	20	0.03542%	80	0.14301%
GRADY	25,440	34	0.13365%	53	0.21012%	87	0.34377%
GREENE	16,092	10	0.06214%	3	0.01968%	13	0.08183%
GWINNETT	842,046	684	0.08123%	256	0.03040%	940	0.11163%
HABERSHAM	43,520	32	0.07353%	10	0.02345%	42	0.09697%
HALL	185,416	14	0.00755%	1	0.00030%	15	0.00785%
HANCOCK	8,996	20	0.22232%	9	0.10476%	29	0.32708%
HARALSON	28,400	24	0.08451%	5	0.01773%	29	0.10224%
HARRIS	32,550	28	0.08602%	9	0.02621%	37	0.11223%
HART	25,518	23	0.09013%	5	0.02132%	28	0.11145%
HEARD	11,633	17	0.14614%	3	0.02889%	20	0.17502%
HENRY	209,053	123	0.05884%	61	0.02901%	184	0.08785%
HOUSTON	146,136	132	0.09033%	16	0.01084%	148	0.10116%
IRWIN	9,600	12	0.12500%	5	0.04885%	17	0.17385%
JACKSON	60,571	48	0.07925%	16	0.02627%	64	0.10552%
JASPER	13,630	13	0.09538%	3	0.01882%	16	0.11420%
JEFF DAVIS	15,156	18	0.11876%	9	0.05884%	27	0.17760%
JEFFERSON	16,432	51	0.31037%	30	0.18348%	81	0.49385%
JENKINS	9,213	10	0.10854%	4	0.04393%	14	0.15247%
JOHNSON	9,897	17	0.17177%	8	0.07745%	25	0.24922%
JONES	28,577	27	0.09448%	5	0.01656%	32	0.11104%
LAMAR	18,057	17	0.09415%	3	0.01895%	20	0.11310%
LANIER	10,400	13	0.12500%	3	0.02407%	16	0.14907%
LAURENS	48,041	28	0.05828%	16	0.03385%	44	0.09213%
LEE	28,746	22	0.07653%	6	0.02001%	28	0.09655%
LIBERTY	65,471	16	0.02444%	6	0.00936%	22	0.03380%
LINCOLN	7,737	4	0.05170%	2	0.02796%	6	0.07966%
LONG	16,048	17	0.10593%	3	0.01722%	20	0.12315%
LOWNDES	114,552	36	0.03143%	14	0.01223%	50	0.04366%
LUMPKIN	30,611	29	0.09474%	4	0.01425%	33	0.10899%
MACON	21,663	31	0.14310%	8	0.03556%	39	0.17866%
MADISON	13,839	22	0.15897%	4	0.02959%	26	0.18856%
MARION	14,263	23	0.16126%	7	0.04805%	30	0.20930%
MCDUFFIE	27,922	16	0.05730%	3	0.01014%	19	0.06744%

COUNTY	2012 POPULATION	UNSHelterED HOMELESS COUNT	PERCENT OF POPULATION	PRECARIOUSLY HOUSED COUNT	PERCENT OF POPULATION	TOTAL	PERCENT OF POPULATION
MCINTOSH	8,711	13	0.14924%	6	0.07454%	19	0.22378%
MERIWEETH	21,273	41	0.19273%	7	0.03479%	48	0.22753%
MILLER	5,969	8	0.13403%	11	0.17952%	19	0.31355%
MITCHELL	23,144	2	0.00864%	1	0.00218%	3	0.01082%
MONROE	26,637	22	0.08259%	6	0.02165%	28	0.10424%
MONTGOME	8,913	16	0.17951%	7	0.07329%	23	0.25280%
MORGAN	17,881	17	0.09507%	5	0.02706%	22	0.12213%
MURRAY	39,392	4	0.01015%	1	0.00208%	5	0.01224%
MUSCOGEE	198,413	110	0.05544%	22	0.01109%	132	0.06653%
NEWTON	101,505	85	0.08374%	11	0.01090%	96	0.09463%
OCONEE	33,619	25	0.07436%	8	0.02409%	33	0.09845%
OGLETHOR	14,618	18	0.12314%	6	0.03906%	24	0.16220%
PAULDING	144,800	84	0.05801%	38	0.02597%	122	0.08398%
PEACH	27,622	17	0.06155%	4	0.01314%	21	0.07468%
PICKENS	29,268	23	0.07858%	5	0.01631%	28	0.09490%
PIERCE	18,844	7	0.03715%	3	0.01849%	10	0.05564%
PIKE	17,810	17	0.09545%	5	0.02669%	22	0.12214%
POLK	41,188	30	0.07284%	7	0.01629%	37	0.08912%
PULASKI	11,720	18	0.15358%	4	0.03296%	22	0.18655%
PUTNAM	21,198	17	0.08020%	3	0.01196%	20	0.09215%
QUITMAN	2,404	3	0.12479%	1	0.05583%	4	0.18062%
RABUN	16,297	9	0.05522%	2	0.01014%	11	0.06536%
RANDOLPH	7,327	11	0.15013%	6	0.07547%	17	0.22559%
RICHMOND	202,587	135	0.06664%	145	0.07146%	280	0.13809%
ROCKDALE	85,820	41	0.04777%	20	0.02375%	61	0.07152%
SCHLEY	4,990	7	0.14028%	3	0.07013%	10	0.21041%
SCREVEN	14,202	18	0.12674%	9	0.06126%	27	0.18800%
SEMINOLE	8,947	12	0.13412%	5	0.05425%	17	0.18837%
SPALDING	63,865	90	0.14092%	18	0.02870%	108	0.16962%
STEPHENS	25,891	60	0.23174%	13	0.05072%	73	0.28247%
STEWART	6,042	12	0.19861%	6	0.10088%	18	0.29949%
SUMTER	31,554	23	0.07289%	13	0.04269%	36	0.11558%
TALBOT	6,517	10	0.15344%	4	0.06745%	14	0.22090%
TALIAFERRO	1,680	7	0.41667%	3	0.19337%	10	0.61003%
TATTNALL	25,384	37	0.14576%	14	0.05706%	51	0.20282%
TAYLOR	8,420	13	0.15439%	5	0.05631%	18	0.21070%
TELFER	16,349	19	0.11622%	11	0.06902%	30	0.18523%
TERRELL	9,045	15	0.16584%	24	0.26149%	39	0.42732%
THOMAS	44,724	26	0.05813%	7	0.01590%	33	0.07403%
TIFT	41,064	29	0.07062%	19	0.04601%	48	0.11663%
TOOMBS	27,315	3	0.01098%	6	0.02353%	9	0.03452%
TOWNS	10,495	5	0.04764%	1	0.01059%	6	0.05823%
TREUTLEN	6,769	14	0.20683%	7	0.09935%	21	0.30618%
TROUP	68,468	39	0.05696%	18	0.02619%	57	0.08315%
TURNER	8,410	9	0.10702%	5	0.05439%	14	0.16141%
TWIGGS	8,447	12	0.14206%	6	0.06936%	18	0.21143%
UNION	21,451	17	0.07925%	4	0.01658%	21	0.09583%
UPSON	26,630	24	0.09012%	5	0.01932%	29	0.10944%
WALKER	68,094	63	0.09252%	14	0.01988%	77	0.11240%
WALTON	84,575	92	0.10878%	38	0.04443%	130	0.15321%
WARE	35,821	19	0.05304%	3	0.00843%	22	0.06147%
WARREN	5,578	9	0.16135%	26	0.46612%	35	0.62747%
WASHINGT	20,879	36	0.17242%	18	0.08769%	54	0.26011%
WAYNE	30,305	24	0.07919%	17	0.05496%	41	0.13415%
WEBSTER	2,793	6	0.21482%	3	0.10205%	9	0.31687%
WHEELER	7,888	9	0.11410%	5	0.06566%	14	0.17976%
WHITE	27,556	60	0.21774%	12	0.04330%	72	0.26103%
WHITFIELD	103,359	68	0.06579%	310	0.29983%	378	0.36562%
WILCOX	9,068	11	0.12131%	6	0.06588%	17	0.18719%
WILKES	10,076	10	0.09925%	4	0.04334%	14	0.14258%
WILKINSO	9,577	11	0.11486%	6	0.06385%	17	0.17870%
WORTH	21,741	2	0.00920%	4	0.02007%	6	0.02927%
GEORGIA	9,919,945	8,492	0.08560%	4,047	0.04079%	12,538	0.12640%

2015 Point in Time Homeless Count Results



On January 26th of 2015, **5,797** individuals were homeless in the Georgia Balance of State Continuum of Care (BoS CoC).

Georgia BoS CoC Number of Literally Homeless Individuals			
	2011	2013	2015
Sheltered (Emergency Shelter or Transitional housing)	2,313	2,334	2,279
Unsheltered	8,855	5,317	3,518
Total	11,168	7,651	5,797
Change from Previous Count		-32%	-24%

Demographics

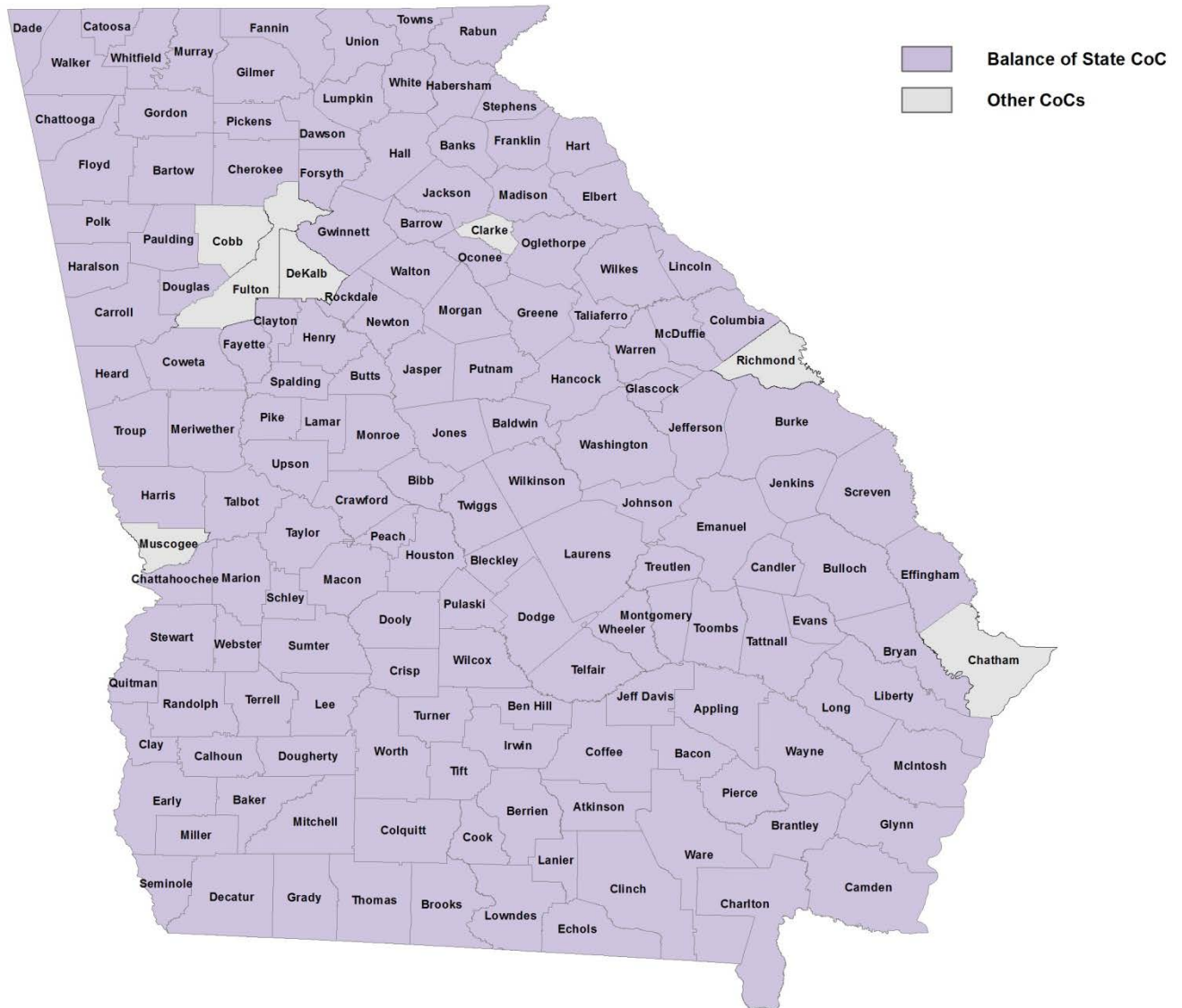
Of those who were homeless in the Georgia BoS on the night of the count...

- 3,293 people or 57% were male
- 1,445 people or 25% were children
- 2,886 people or 50% were African American, 2,886 people or 45% were White, and 280 people or 5% were other races
- 350 people or 6% were Hispanic
- 553 people or 10% were veterans
- 931 people or 16% were chronically homeless

Special Populations

- Of those who are unsheltered homeless 786, or 22%, are people in families with children
- 241 persons or 78% of homeless youth between the age of 18 and 24 are unsheltered
- Chronic homelessness has decreased by only 36 people in the last 2 years
- 833 people who are chronically homeless, or 90%, are unsheltered
- 76% of homeless veterans, or 420 persons, are unsheltered
- The proportions of homeless veterans and chronically homeless individuals continue to climb. Of the total homeless population, the percentage of veterans increased from 7% in 2013 to 10% in 2015 and the percentage of chronically homeless individuals increased from 13% in 2013 to 16% in 2015.

The Georgia Balance of State Continuum of Care (BoS CoC) is a planning body that coordinates and provides housing and services funding for homeless individuals and families to address the various needs of homeless persons or those at risk of homelessness. The Georgia BoS CoC spans 152 out of Georgia's 159 counties.



The Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) serves as the collaborative applicant for the BoS CoC. For the unsheltered Point in Time homeless count DCA partners with Kennesaw State University, the A.L. Burruss Institute of Public Service and Research, and a sample of local service organizations and local governments across the CoC. These local entities collect data on the homeless population in their communities that is then processed by the Burruss Institute, and analyzed by Kennesaw State University to create a model that predicts the rate of homelessness for each of the 152 counties in the BoS CoC.