



2023

RURAL POLK COUNTY

POINT IN TIME COUNT METHODOLOGY REPORT



Introduction

Every year during the last ten days of January, our region conducts a comprehensive count of the local population experiencing homelessness. The Point In Time (PIT) Count measures the prevalence of homelessness in each community and collects information on individuals and families experiencing homelessness.

This year, The Polk County Family & Community Outreach Department (FCO) partnered with multiple agencies to survey people throughout rural Polk County (excluding West Salem), not only about where they slept on the night of January 23, 2023, but also about other barriers they face related to housing.

FCO staff created a survey unique to rural Polk County to match the HUD required questions in the PIT Count survey but allowed the survey to continue beyond the question of "where did you sleep on the night of January 23, 2023?". This allowed us to continue interviews and collect data relevant to the people we are trying to reach with our homelessness prevention efforts. We collected information about people who are not only literally street homeless but are also doubled up, couch surfing, sleeping in RVs, or experiencing other barriers to safe and secure housing. This also allowed us to ask additional questions that were important to individual communities in rural Polk County, such as "do you have previous ties to the town/community that you are currently staying in?" The data collected through this survey was later uploaded into the HUD app, *Counting Us*.

Because street camping isn't predominantly visible in rural Polk County, we utilized several different methods to implement our survey. This included hosting a Community Connect outreach event, working with social service partners to conduct the survey, and spending a day conducting traditional street outreach. The following pages describe our survey implementation methodology.

The Survey

The Rural Polk County Point in Time Count survey was created in JotForm and did not require an app download on any device for volunteers to conduct the survey.

- The survey was web based but was also offered in a paper format for those with any connectivity barriers.
- The survey consisted of 31 questions and took approximately 3 minutes to complete.
- We offered a virtual training to anybody who was helping to conduct the survey.

SURVEY EXAMPLE:

The image displays three screenshots of a web-based survey form. The first screenshot shows the beginning of the survey with questions about the respondent's name, gender, date of birth, and age range. The second screenshot shows a question about the type of vehicle or structure the respondent is staying in, with a list of options and a text input field for the number of people sleeping there. The third screenshot shows two questions about previous ties to the community and current homelessness, each with radio button options for YES, NO, and I'm not sure.

What is your name? (IF REFUSED: Provide Initials) *

Test Test

First Name or Initial Last Name or Initial

What is your gender? *

Male

Female

Transgender

A gender other than singularly male or female (e.g. non-binary, genderfluid, agender, culturally specific gender)

Questioning

I don't know

Refuse to answer

What is your date of birth?

MM-DD-YYYY

Date

What age range do you fall into? *

Less than 5 years old

5-12 years old

13-17 years old

18-24 years old

AA polkoregonjotform.jotform.com

What type of vehicle or structure are you staying in? *

Car

Boat

RV

Van

Tent

Makeshift Shelter

Abandoned Building

N/A

Other

Including yourself, how many people are sleeping in this vehicle or structure? *

ex: 5

Back Next

Do you have previous ties to the town/community that you are currently staying in? Example: You attended school here, have family or friends here, you previously lived in this community. *

YES

NO

Do you remember the city and state that you were living in when you became homeless this time? *

YES

NO

Are you experiencing homelessness or this type of living situation as a direct result of COVID-19? *

YES

NO

I'm not sure

Are you experiencing homelessness or this type of living situation because you are fleeing a traumatic situation? *

YES

NO

I'm not sure

IMPLEMENTATION METHOD #1

The Polk County Community Connect

The Polk County Community Connect is an open house style resource connection event that aims to provide valuable, tangible resources all in one place. At this event, over 290 people were offered resources related to housing, employment, education, emergency assistance, health insurance, and were offered on-site services, such as pet care, dental care, haircuts, a warm meal, and more. Over 45 social service agencies were on hand providing these services throughout the day. Hosting this event gave us the opportunity to have the population experiencing barriers come to us, rather than us attempt to track people down.

The event was held at a church in Dallas and was open to the entire county. Because transportation can be a barrier, we offered free transportation from Monmouth, Independence, Falls City, Grand Ronde, Willamina, and Perrydale. Each transportation site was staffed with volunteers trained to complete the survey in the event that somebody did not feel comfortable getting on the bus.

The event was hosted on January 24, 2023 to line up with the HUD required question "where did you sleep on the night of January 23, 2023?". At entry, every person who attended the event was asked this question. If they answered that they slept in a home that they rent or own AND felt safe in that home, they were given a green bracelet and granted entry into the event. If they answered anything other than that, they were asked to meet with one of our volunteers at the welcome table to answer a few more questions. This allowed us to conduct the survey in a conversational way and allowed our volunteers to really find out the needs of our guests and guide them through the event accordingly.



IMPLEMENTATION METHOD #2

Community Partnerships

We worked with staff and representatives from local food banks, school districts, code enforcement, law enforcement, behavioral health, medical offices, libraries, warming shelters, local businesses, churches, Polk County Health Services, and Polk County Community Corrections to complete surveys with individuals that they were already working with and have established relationships with. We offered virtual and in-person trainings tailored to these partners to conduct the survey in a trauma informed way.



IMPLEMENTATION METHOD #3

Community Events

FCO Staff and volunteers hosted an outreach table at several community events, giving away hand warmers, grab-and-go snacks, and hygiene supplies, while conducting surveys with guests. Community events included Falls City produce distribution, Iskam Mek Mek-Haws mobile pantry, Ella Curran Food Bank distribution, and a pop-up event at the Falls City Community Center.



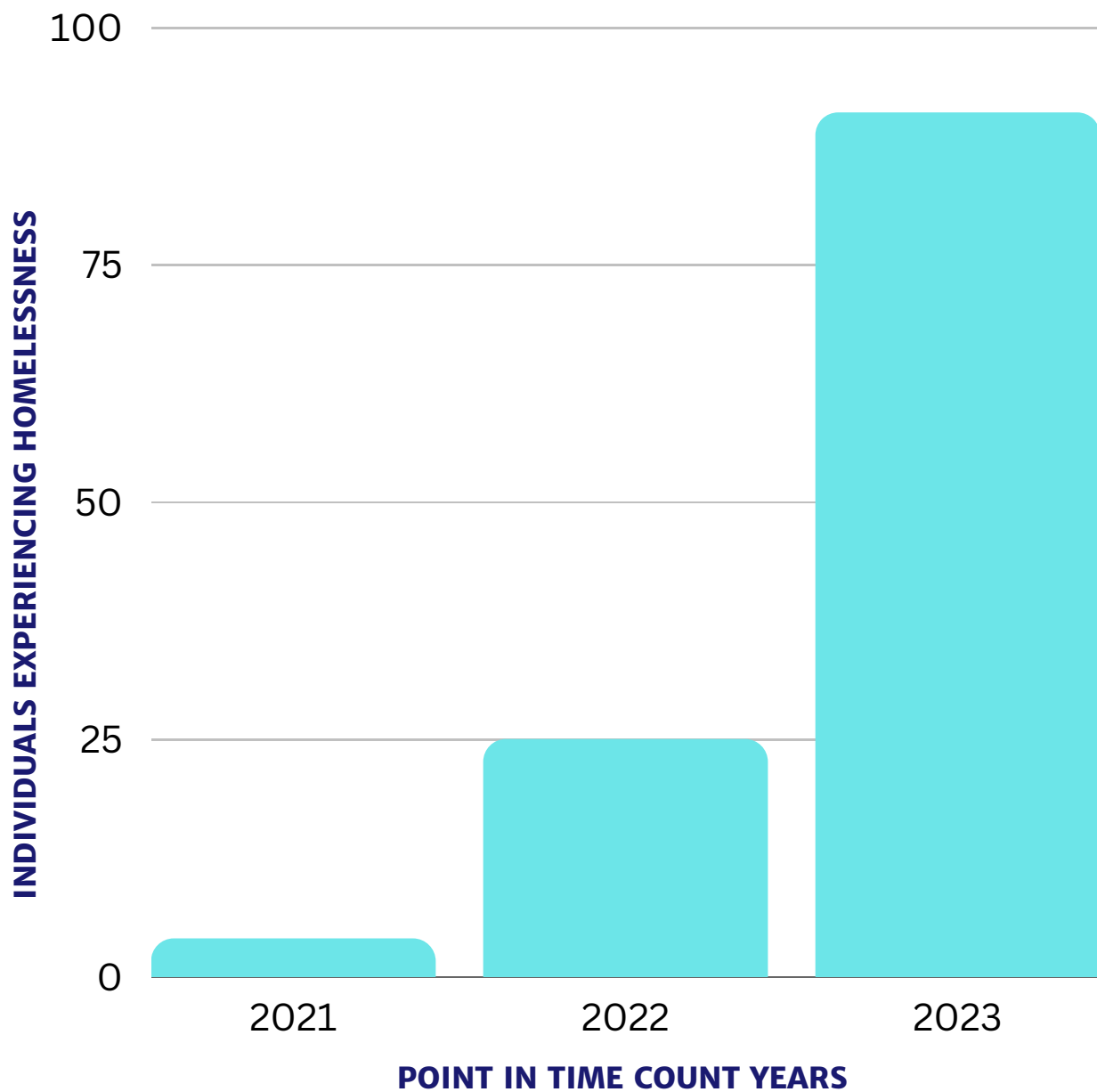
IMPLEMENTATION METHOD #4

Street & Camp Outreach

To ensure that we were making an effort to meet people who may not have been reached in other ways, we conducted one day of street and camp outreach. Volunteers and FCO staff spent time walking around Monmouth, Independence, Willamina, Falls City, Dallas, and Grand Ronde talking with people experiencing homelessness. They offered coffee, donuts, warming supplies, and hygiene supplies while completing surveys with individuals. Additionally, FCO Staff and volunteers drove around isolated areas of rural Polk County and located small camps & parking areas where the survey was conducted and resources were offered.



In 2021 the unsheltered homeless count in Rural Polk County was 4, in 2022 the count increased to 25, and in 2023 we counted 91 unsheltered homeless individuals. Although we know that homelessness has increased over the last 3 years, we believe that the large increase that we saw this year was due to the methodology and approach used for the PIT Count in 2023



RURAL POLK COUNTY 2023 POINT IN TIME COUNT DATA



Every year during the last ten days of January, our region conducts a comprehensive count of the local population experiencing homelessness. The Point In Time Count measures the prevalence of homelessness in each community and collects information on individuals and families experiencing homelessness.

This year, The Polk County Family & Community Outreach Department partnered with multiple agencies to survey people throughout rural Polk County (excluding West Salem), not only about where they slept on the night of January 23, 2023, but also about other barriers they face related to housing.

Thank you to everyone who helped us survey our Polk County neighbors who are unhoused or at risk of being homeless.

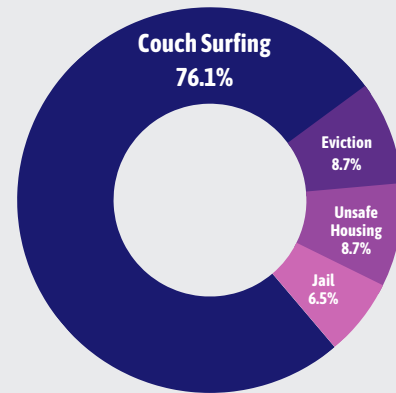
180
INDIVIDUALS
EXPERIENCING
HOMELESSNESS OR
AT RISK OF
HOMELESSNESS

Adults (25+)
142

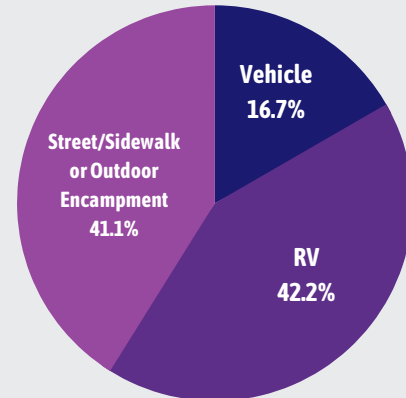
Youth (18-24)
16

Youth (0-17)
22

AT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS BARRIERS OR CURRENT LIVING SITUATION



UNSHELTERED HOMELESS CURRENT LIVING SITUATION



91

Unsheltered Homeless

(Sleeping outside, in a vehicle, RV, or someplace not intended for human habitation.)



43

Sheltered Homeless

(Sleeping in a temporary or emergency shelter, transitional housing, or in a hotel.)



46

At Risk of Homelessness

(Couch surfing, sleeping in unsafe or tumultuous housing, facing eviction, or currently in jail.)



Of the 38 rural Polk County youth surveyed for the 2023 Point in Time Count, 16% are currently unsheltered.

DEMOGRAPHICS

INDIVIDUALS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS OR AT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS

38% Female

54% Male

7% Veteran

8% Transgender, Questioning, or Unknown

7% Seniors (65+)

COMMUNITY CONNECTION

84%

OF INDIVIDUALS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS OR AT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS, REPORT HAVING TIES TO THE COMMUNITY THAT THEY ARE CURRENTLY STAYING IN

CHRONICALLY HOMELESS

86%

OF INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE UNSHELTERED HAVE BEEN HOMELESS FOR A YEAR OR LONGER, OR MORE THAN ONCE IN THEIR LIFETIME

MENTAL HEALTH

48%

OF INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE UNSHELTERED REPORT THAT THEIR MENTAL HEALTH IMPACTS THEIR ABILITY TO MAINTAIN STABLE EMPLOYMENT OR HOUSING

RURAL POLK COUNTY 2023 POINT IN TIME COUNT DATA



INDEPENDENCE

34 INDIVIDUALS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS OR ARE AT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS

18 Unsheltered

1 Sheltered

15 At Risk

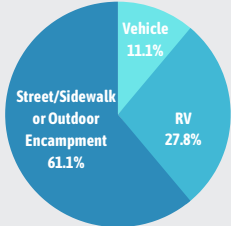
Adults (25+) **21**

Youth (18-24) **9**

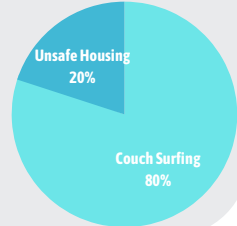
Youth (0-17) **4**



UNSHeltered HOMELESS
CURRENT LIVING SITUATION



AT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS
CURRENT LIVING SITUATION



MONMOUTH

15 INDIVIDUALS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS OR ARE AT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS

5 Unsheltered

4 Sheltered

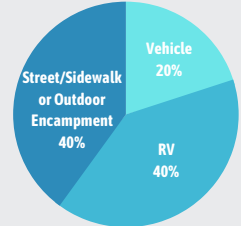
6 At Risk

Adults (25+) **14**

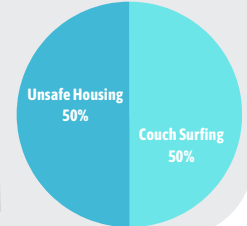
Youth (18-24) **1**



UNSHeltered HOMELESS
CURRENT LIVING SITUATION



AT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS
CURRENT LIVING SITUATION



DALLAS

81 INDIVIDUALS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS OR ARE AT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS

31 Unsheltered

31 Sheltered

19 At Risk

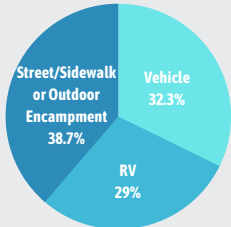
Adults (25+) **58**

Youth (18-24) **5**

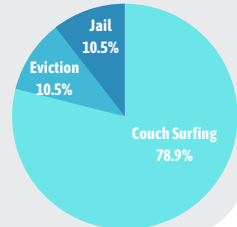
Youth (0-17) **18**



UNSHeltered HOMELESS
CURRENT LIVING SITUATION



AT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS
CURRENT LIVING SITUATION



FALLS CITY

36 INDIVIDUALS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS OR ARE AT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS

27 Unsheltered

7 Sheltered

2 At Risk

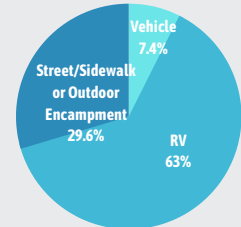
Adults (25+) **36**

Youth (18-24) **NO SURVEY DATA**

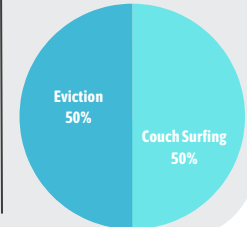
Youth (0-17) **NO SURVEY DATA**



UNSHeltered HOMELESS
CURRENT LIVING SITUATION



AT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS
CURRENT LIVING SITUATION



GRAND RONDE AREA

10 INDIVIDUALS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS OR ARE AT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS

8 Unsheltered

2 At Risk

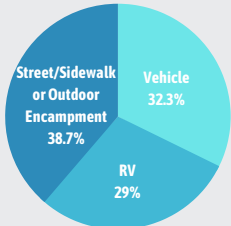
Adults (25+) **9**

Youth (18-24) **1**

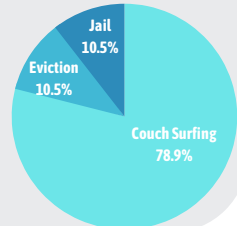
Youth (0-17) **NO SURVEY DATA**



UNSHeltered HOMELESS
CURRENT LIVING SITUATION



AT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS
CURRENT LIVING SITUATION



WILLAMINA

4 INDIVIDUALS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS OR ARE AT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS

2 Unsheltered

2 At Risk

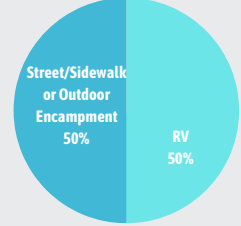
Adults (25+) **4**

Youth (18-24) **NO SURVEY DATA**

Youth (0-17) **NO SURVEY DATA**



UNSHeltered HOMELESS
CURRENT LIVING SITUATION



AT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS
CURRENT LIVING SITUATION

