



## 2022 HAWAI'I COUNTY POINT IN TIME COUNT TOPLINE REPORT

### OVERVIEW

**What is the Point in Time Count?** A point-in-time (PIT) count provides an unduplicated snapshot of how many people experienced homelessness in a community on a given night, or a “point in time.” On the Neighbor Islands, there are three designated communities: Hawai'i County, Maui County and Kauai County, who each conduct their counts independently. However, these three communities, and every community across the nation, inquiries about the same point in time, which, this year in our community, was January 23. The count includes both sheltered (living in congregate homeless shelters) and unsheltered (living on the streets or in areas unfit for human habitation) populations. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires that communities receiving federal funds from the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Grants program conduct an annual sheltered count during the last week of January and a biannual unsheltered count. However, in the interest of having the most current data, our community elected to conduct unsheltered counts annually.

Unsheltered counts are conducted by homeless outreach workers and volunteers, who canvas our community to count the people who appear to be living in places not meant for human habitation.

This includes individuals and families living in parks, beaches, cars, and tents. This year, housing advocates and volunteers canvassed areas like these across the neighbor islands, asking, “Where did you sleep on January 23rd?” People experiencing sheltered homelessness (meaning they reside in a county-recognized homeless shelter) are counted through data collected from the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), which is the database used by homeless service providers to keep track of those who utilize services.

This annual count is one tool used to track progress, inform public opinion, increase public awareness, and attract resources to effectively address homelessness in our communities. The PIT Count helps communities plan services and programs to appropriately address local needs, measure progress in decreasing homelessness, and identify strengths and gaps in a community's current homelessness assistance system. The PIT Count provides a one-night snapshot of homelessness experiences on Hawai'i Island, Maui, and Kaua'i. The collected data is compared county to county and year to year and provides benchmarks to help stakeholders understand homelessness in their respective communities.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, more than \$27.4 million dollars in financial assistance has been distributed by a network of on-island non-profit organizations for rent, utilities, and mortgage assistance. Without this funding, overall homelessness would have been significantly higher.

This network of local non-profits in partnership with the Counties also launched new prevention, diversion, financial empowerment, and housing stability programs including a Coordination Center in the County of Hawai'i that focused on preventing individuals and families from falling into homelessness.

## **HAWAI'I COUNTY STATISTICS AND TRENDS**

Table 1 summarizes the total number of sheltered and unsheltered homeless for Hawai'i Island over the last five years. An unsheltered count was not conducted in 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The table presents sheltered, unsheltered, and total homelessness each year. Individual and family homelessness is broken out within each component to detail differences from year to year between these key population groups. Charts identifying trends in homelessness for Hawai'i Island can be viewed from the dashboards link presented in the Overview section.

As a result of adding shelter beds, sheltered homelessness is the highest it has been over the five-year period. More detailed monthly occupancy and vacancy statistics by project relative to stated capacity can be found on the BTG website under the Monitoring Reports section of the Reports header. Unsheltered homelessness increased six percent (33 people) to 554 total people when compared to 2020. Unsheltered homelessness among individuals increased 14 percent (60 people) compared to 2020.

The total number of homeless families was 66, two fewer than 2020. There were 48 sheltered families identified, up 50 percent compared to 2021. In 2021, family shelter capacity was reduced to meet Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance.

**Table 1: Hawai'i Island Summary, 2018-2022**

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Sheltered Individuals	200	243	276	227	283
Individuals	76	74	117	109	88
Fam Individuals	124	169	159	118	195
Adults	46	68	76	48	79
Children	78	101	83	70	116
Families	33	41	46	32	48
All Households	109	113	160	138	136
Unsheltered Individuals	669	447	521	NA	554
Individuals	445	385	436	NA	496

Fam Individuals	224	62	85	NA	58
Adults	102	27	36	NA	25
Children	122	35	49	NA	33
Families	54	14	22	NA	18
All Households	440	374	415	NA	483
Total Sheltered & Unsheltered	869	690	797	NA	837
Individuals	521	459	553	NA	584
Fam Individuals	348	231	244	NA	253
Adults	148	95	112	NA	104
Children	200	136	132	NA	149
Families	87	55	68	NA	66
All Households	549	487	575	NA	619

## **Regional Summary**

**Table 2: Hawai'i Island Unsheltered Homeless Households by Region, 2018-2022**

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Individual Households	386	360	393	NA	465
1: North Kohala	6	2	0	NA	0
2: Hamakua	17	6	18	NA	6
3: North Hilo	2	0	1	NA	16
4: South Hilo	124	136	169	NA	229

5: Puna	44	16	62	NA	33
6: Ka`u	30	23	11	NA	12
7: South Kona	9	13	1	NA	22
8: North Kona	129	139	115	NA	134
9: South Kohala	25	25	16	NA	13
Family Households	54	14	22	NA	18
1: North Kohala	0	0	0	NA	1
2: Hamakua	1	0	0	NA	0
3: North Hilo	0	0	1	NA	0
4: South Hilo	8	3	6	NA	5
5: Puna	9	3	5	NA	5
6: Ka`u	23	4	3	NA	0
7: South Kona	2	0	1	NA	0
8: North Kona	7	1	6	NA	7
9: South Kohala	4	3	0	NA	0
All Households	440	374	415	NA	483
1: North Kohala	6	2	0	NA	1
2: Hamakua	18	6	18	NA	6
3: North Hilo	2	0	2	NA	16
4: South Hilo	132	139	175	NA	234

5: Puna	53	19	67	NA	38
6: Ka`u	53	27	14	NA	12
7: South Kona	11	13	2	NA	22
8: North Kona	136	140	121	NA	141
9: South Kohala	29	28	16	NA	13

### **Additional Unsheltered Questions**

In 2022, Hawai'i island continued to collect data on two additional questions through unsheltered canvassing. The following questions were included on the Single and Household unsheltered survey forms and were only administered on Hawai'i island?

- *Did you move to Hawai'i within the past year?*
- *What led to your current living situation?*

Table 3 presents response data from the question “*Did you Move to Hawai'i within the past year?*”. Of the 483 households surveyed, 413 provided responses (86%), with 34 of the 413 (8%) stating that they had moved to Hawai'i within the past year. All 34 responses came from individual households. Tables 4 through 6 presents data for households responding “Yes” to the initial question.

**Table 3: Did you move to Hawai'i within the past year?**

	Fam HH	Individual HH	Total
Yes	0	34	34
No	16	363	379
Unknown/Refused	2	68	70
Total	18	465	483

**Table 4: If yes, what State or Country did you come from?**

	Fam HH	Individual HH	Total
State	NA	31	31

AK	NA	1	1
AZ	NA	1	1
CA	NA	9	9
CO	NA	1	1
ID	NA	1	1
ME	NA	1	1
OH	NA	1	1
OR	NA	1	1
TX	NA	2	2
WA	NA	2	2
Refused to answer	NA	11	11
Foreign Country	NA	3	3
England	NA	1	1
Panama	NA	1	1
South Korea	NA	1	1
Total	NA	34	34

Of the 23 households providing responses, 20 came from states, while three came from foreign countries. Of the 20 state responses, nine came from California. Eight of the 34 households moving to Hawai'i within the past year indicated that they would be interested in returning to their home state. For the 34 households that arrived within the last year, Table 12 displays data on why they moved to Hawai'i.

**Table 5: If yes, are you interested in returning home?**

	Fam HH	Individual HH	Total
Yes	NA	8	8
No	NA	26	26
Total	NA	34	34

**Table 6: If yes, why did you come to Hawai'i?**

	Fam HH	Individual HH	Total
Came for a work/trade living arrangement	NA	1	1
Came for the beautiful weather	NA	6	6
To move with family/friends and didn't work out	NA	9	9
Other	NA	18	18
Total	NA	34	34

Table 7 presents data from the survey question “*What led to your current living situation?*”. This question allowed for only one selection, intended to be the primary reason that each household was living unsheltered on the night of the count.

The most prevalent response leading to homelessness was a family or relationship conflict, followed by inability to pay rent. These two comprised 55 percent of the responses. The table below includes additional categories that differ from the choices on the final unsheltered survey. These additional categories group the “Other” responses which were initially collected during the Hawai'i unsheltered canvassing. COVID-19 was added as an option in 2022.

**Table 7: What led to your current living situation?**

Primary Reason	Fam HH	Individual HH	Total
Family/Relationship conflict	8	151	159
Unable to pay rent	3	106	109

Lost job		21	21
Medical emergency	1	12	13
COVID-19		11	11
Kilauea eruption		2	2
Unknown/Refused	2	79	81
Other:	4	83	87
Evicted	4	22	26
Choose to live unsheltered		22	22
Mental illness		13	13
Incarceration		10	10
Substance use		8	8
Chronic disability		2	2
House burned down		2	2
Lost land		2	2
Saving money to buy land		1	1
Unsafe living situation		1	1
Total	18	465	483

## **Discussion of Results**

### **Family Homelessness**

Hawai'i County continues to be successful in reducing family homelessness. The County has reduced family homelessness by 24% over the last five years with a significant reduction in unsheltered family homelessness, down 67% in the same period.



The County also eliminated family veteran homelessness by housing the last 3 identified families to permanent housing in 2021.

Chronic family households — defined as a household experiencing homelessness equivalent to a year and have at least one disabling condition — decreased by 62%, from thirteen (13) households in 2020 to five (5) in 2022.

The total family households experiencing homelessness decreased by 3% since 2020. Sixty-six (66) families with minor children were identified in this year's count, two (2) fewer than 2020. Of the 66 families, only eighteen (18) families were identified living in unsheltered situations. That is a decrease of 18% since 2020.

The remaining forty-eight (48) families sheltered temporarily at local hotels and emergency shelters managed by Child & Family Services, Hawai'i Affordable Properties, Neighborhood Place of Puna and HOPE Services Hawai'i.

In 2021, the census of families staying in emergency shelters was lower than usual, at thirty-two (32) families, due to the direct result of COVID-19 guidance recommended by the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) to decrease congregate sheltering.

### **Individual Households**

Hawai'i County saw a slight increase in individuals experiencing homelessness, up six percent (6%) from 553 total persons in 2020 to 584 in 2022. We believe that this is the result of the closure of temporary shelters that were put into place in response to COVID-19. Unsheltered individuals increased by sixty (60) — with the largest increase in South Hilo — and individuals in emergency shelter decreasing by twenty-nine (29).

Veteran homelessness decreased by thirty percent (30%) to 43 individuals from 61 in 2020.

Chronic homelessness increased by five percent (5%) to 281 individuals from 267 in 2020.

### **Looking ahead in Hawai'i County:**

Hawai'i County continues to have a high level of community buy-in and participation in the shared goal of compassionately reducing homelessness. The local homeless continuum of care, Community Alliance Partners, has a broad range of non-traditional partners, a clear strategic plan, and actively advocates for resources and policies to address homelessness and housing unaffordability.

We believe the following interventions contributed to the decrease in family homelessness:

1. *Launched a "No Child Left Outside" campaign*, using a by name list to cultivate additional housing units for families. Staff time and resources were targeted on family homelessness for 6 weeks in order to house all families within a targeted time period;
2. Our local continuum of care led advocacy efforts with the County of Hawai'i, Office of Housing & Community Development (OHCD) to *prioritize housing vouchers for families experiencing homelessness* in our County. These included vouchers offered by the Mainstream, Tenant Based Rent Assistance (TBRA) and the Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHV) programs;
3. Continued investment by the County and its allocated 'Ohana Zone funding to support the West Hawai'i Family Assessment Center at Ulu Wini; and

4. A local non-profit launched a *Master Leasing* effort with multiple property owners to lease their housing units to the non profit and allow the non profit to sub-lease it to formerly homeless families, when families were turned away by all other property owners multiple times.

We believe the following interventions contributed to the overall effectiveness of our homeless programs:

1. A total of **\$27.4** million dollars in financial assistance for rent, utilities, and mortgages was distributed by a network of six (6) on-island non-profit organizations in partnership with the County of Hawai'i. To-date, over 3,700 unduplicated households, consisting of 11,442 individuals, have been assisted in remaining housed.
2. This network of local non-profits in partnership with the County of Hawai'i, also *launched new prevention, diversion, financial empowerment and housing stability programs including a Coordination Center* that focuses on preventing individuals and families from falling into homelessness;
3. The OHCD implemented a landlord incentive program to encourage new and returning landlords to participate in the federal voucher programs; and
4. Local non-profits, set aside *additional financial resources towards a damage/repair fund* for new housing units.

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## COMMUNITY ACTIONS TO ADDRESSING HOMELESSNESS

While BTG's focus remains on housing the houseless, this unprecedented pandemic compels us to ramp up preventative measures. Without intentional resources on this front, the resulting impact could exacerbate homelessness in our community.

BTG endorses the following actions:

1. **BUILD, ACQUIRE, AND PRESERVE AFFORDABLE HOUSING**  
Hawai'i must continue to dedicate itself to increasing the supply of housing and creating new housing opportunities. BTG will continue to advocate for the prioritization of funding to support an increase in permanent housing. Without increasing affordable housing opportunities, the flow of individuals moving into housing becomes stagnant and creates longer stays at shelters.  
  
Strengthen landlord incentives to increase participation by property owners in subsidized housing programs, which includes but is not limited to a sign-up bonus for first-time or returning landlords and financial protections for repair costs of tenant-caused property damage when the repair costs exceed the tenant's security deposit.
2. **INCREASE PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING PROGRAMS**  
It is critical to prevent the loss of housing among people who are living in permanent supportive housing. For chronically homeless individuals (those with a disability and long history of homelessness), stable housing and supportive services are the foundation for

stability. Permanent supportive housing programs are project-based, clustered, or scattered site permanent housing linked with supportive services that help residents sustain housing. The Permanent Housing Program is the right intervention for persons with the deepest needs by providing long-term housing stability through rental assistance and/or supportive services.

3. **MAINTAIN RAPID RE-HOUSING (RRH) & LONG TERM RENT SUBSIDY PROGRAMS**

Rapid re-housing is an intervention designed to help individuals and families exit homelessness quickly and return to permanent housing by providing three core program activities including housing identification, time-limited financial assistance, and housing-based case management services.

In addition to shallow subsidies like Rapid re-Housing, it is critical that long-term rental subsidy programs be expanded alongside increases in affordable housing units. In 2021, the U.S Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) released two hundred fourteen (214) new Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHV) on the neighbor islands. We encourage our local Public Housing Agency to continue to apply for additional EHV vouchers and other long-term rental subsidy funding.

4. **EXPAND HOMELESS PREVENTION & DIVERSION STRATEGIES**

We must strengthen practices and increase system capacity to divert families from entering into homelessness. Homeless prevention resources are critical for households who may need some assistance as they struggle to remain housed. Many households will continue to need access to rent, mortgage, and utility assistance throughout the long and uncertain COVID economic recovery.

5. **EXPAND AND ENHANCE STREET OUTREACH**

Individuals experiencing homelessness are at greater risk of exposure to a variety of infectious diseases including influenza and COVID-19. Street Outreach staff are often the only connection to high-risk persons living in homeless encampments or places not meant for human habitation across the island. Health care professionals in partnership with Housing Navigators must be deployed as “Street Medicine Teams” to encampments to assess, treat and educate patients in need of medical assistance, and provide follow-up evaluation and care as needed, delivering care directly to them in their own environment. It is the first essential step in achieving higher levels of medical, mental health, and social care and towards a pathway to securing housing and residential stability.