



KAUA'I COUNTY POINT-IN-TIME COUNT TOPLINE REPORT

2026

OVERVIEW

Every January, counties across the nation carry out the Homeless Point In Time (PIT) Count in their respective jurisdictions. The PIT Count is an annual survey of people experiencing homelessness on a given night.

Bridging the Gap (BTG), which represents Hawai'i County, Maui County and Kaua'i County, is the Neighbor Island's Continuum of Care (CoC). As the Hawai'i balance-of-state CoC, BTG serves as a local planning body designed to promote a community-wide commitment to end homelessness. In response to BTG's responsibility and dedication to achieve this goal, autonomous PIT Counts are conducted in each county. Data is then analyzed and aggregated for total rural county results. The major findings of the jurisdiction's PIT Count are required and reported in the annual funding application to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

This year, teams on Kaua'i canvassed parks, beaches, and many other areas, asking people where they slept on the night of January 25, 2026. This federally mandated survey seeks to count anyone who slept on the street, in a vehicle, in an encampment, or in other areas not meant for human habitation. Sheltered homelessness is counted through data collected from the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and provider census data for January 25. While the PIT Count does not capture every person experiencing homelessness, it provides a one-night snapshot of homelessness on Kaua'i. The data are compared county to county and year to year to help stakeholders understand homelessness in their districts.

BTG did not conduct an unsheltered count in 2025, so full PIT comparisons in this topline report use 2024 as the prior full PIT year. The 2025 data are included only for sheltered comparisons.

KAUA‘I COUNTY STATISTICS AND TRENDS

Table 1 summarizes the total number of sheltered and unsheltered individuals experiencing homelessness on Kaua‘i since 2020. An unsheltered count was not conducted in 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The table presents annual sheltered, unsheltered, and total homelessness counts. Individual and family homelessness are further disaggregated within each category to illustrate year-over-year differences among key population groups.

Table 1: Kaua'i Sheltered and Unsheltered Summary, 2020-2026

	Sheltered		Unsheltered		Total Sheltered & Unsheltered on Kaua'i
	#	%	#	%	
2026	76	15%	440	85%	516
2024	59	11%	464	89%	523
2023	58	12%	430	88%	488
2022	40	9%	404	91%	444
2021	63	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2020	55	13%	369	87%	424

In 2026, the total number of sheltered and unsheltered individuals experiencing homelessness on Kaua‘i decreased by seven people, from 523 in 2024 to 516, representing a 1% decrease. The number of sheltered individuals increased by 17 people, rising from 59 in 2024 to 76 in 2026. At the same time, the number of unsheltered individuals decreased by 24 people, from 464 to 440, representing a 5% decrease.

Table 2: 2026 Kaua'i Sheltered and Unsheltered Family Configuration Summary

	Sheltered		Unsheltered		Total Sheltered & Unsheltered on Kaua'i
	#	%	#	%	
Single Individuals	24	6%	370	94%	394
Family Individuals	52	43%	70	57%	122
Adults	19	39%	30	61%	49
Children	33	45%	40	55%	73
All Individuals	76	15%	440	85%	516
Family Households	12	36%	19	58%	31

Unsheltered homelessness among family individuals decreased to 70 in 2026, a reduction of 24 individuals compared to 2024. This reflects a continued decline in unsheltered family homelessness over recent years. In contrast, the number of unsheltered single individuals remained unchanged at 370.

Within the sheltered population, the number of family individuals increased to 52, while sheltered single individuals decreased to 24. The number of family households increased slightly to 12, compared to 11 in 2024.

Overall, Kaua‘i continues to experience a high proportion of unsheltered homelessness, with approximately 85% of the total population residing in unsheltered locations.

KAUA‘I HOMELESS SUBPOPULATIONS

Kaua‘i continues to collect data on key homeless subpopulations. Table 3 presents this data for 2026 and includes trends since 2022. Sheltered data is further segmented by emergency shelter and transitional housing project types.

Table 3: Kaua‘i Sheltered and Unsheltered Configuration of Serious Mental Illness and Chronic Substance Use, 2022-2026

	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Emergency Shelter					
Serious Mental Illness	3	1	5	10	10
Chronic Substance Use	4	4	5	7	2
Transitional Housing					
Serious Mental Illness	0	1	0	2	2
Chronic Substance Use	0	2	1	0	0
Unsheltered					
Serious Mental Illness	97	119	118	n/a	118
Chronic Substance Use	75	96	99	n/a	96
Total by Subpopulation					
Serious Mental Illness	100	121	123	n/a	130
Chronic Substance Use	79	102	105	n/a	98

The number of individuals reporting serious mental illness increased to 130 in 2026, continuing an upward trend observed in recent years. Meanwhile, the number of individuals reporting chronic substance use decreased to 98, compared to 105 in 2024.

Table 4: Kaua‘i Sheltered and Unsheltered Veteran Summary, 2022-2026

	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Emergency Shelter					
Veterans	4	0	3	6	1
Veteran Families	0	0	0	0	0
Veteran Family Individuals	0	0	0	0	0
Transitional Housing					
Veterans	0	0	0	0	0
Veteran Families	0	0	0	0	0
Veteran Family Individuals	0	0	0	0	0
Unsheltered					
Veterans	33	19	18	n/a	20
Veteran Families	1	0	0	n/a	0
Veteran Family Individuals	3	0	0	n/a	0

The number of veterans experiencing homelessness remained relatively stable in 2026, with 21 veterans identified countywide. Veteran family homelessness remained minimal, with no veteran family households identified in either sheltered or unsheltered settings.

Overall, these findings indicate that while veteran homelessness on Kaua‘i remains comparatively low, continued outreach, housing support, and access to healthcare services remain important components of the county’s homelessness response system.

KAUA‘I UNSHELTERED HOMELESSNESS

Table 5 presents data on unsheltered homelessness on Kaua‘i since 2020. Data reflects responses to the survey question, “Where did you sleep the night of Sunday, January 25, 2026?” The five geographic regions have remained consistent over the years presented.

Table 5: Kaua'i Unsheltered Individuals and Families by Zone, 2020-2026

An unsheltered count was not conducted in 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

	2020	2022	2023	2024	2026
Individuals	269	357	334	370	370
1: West	62	61	68	69	91
2: South	5	17	21	12	13
3: South Central	107	122	113	146	131
4: East	64	122	104	107	116
5: North	31	35	28	36	19
Family Individuals	100	47	96	94	70
1: West	53	13	20	26	20
2: South	0	0	9	8	4
3: South Central	32	17	22	31	36
4: East	6	9	30	23	4
5: North	9	8	15	6	6
All Individuals	369	404	430	464	440
1: West	115	74	88	95	111
2: South	5	17	30	20	17
3: South Central	139	139	135	177	167
4: East	70	131	134	130	120
5: North	40	43	43	42	25

In 2026, unsheltered homelessness decreased by 24 individuals, from 464 in 2024 to 440, representing a 5% decrease.

Regional data showed varying trends across the island. The largest decreases were observed in the South Central and East regions. The South-Central region decreased from 177 to 167 individuals, while the East region decreased from 130 to 120 individuals.

In contrast, the West region experienced an increase from 95 to 111 individuals, suggesting a shift in the geographic distribution of unsheltered homelessness across the island. The North region decreased from 42 to 25 individuals, while the South region remained relatively stable.

Overall, while modest reductions in unsheltered homelessness were observed in 2026, most individuals experiencing homelessness on Kaua‘i continue to reside in unsheltered locations, highlighting the ongoing need for housing resources, outreach, and supportive services throughout the county.

COMMUNITY ACTIONS TO ADDRESS HOMELESSNESS

1. BUILD, ACQUIRE, AND PRESERVE AFFORDABLE HOUSING: Increase deeply affordable housing, especially for households at or below 30 percent of Area Median Income. Without additional affordable housing, the flow from homelessness into housing becomes stagnant and length of homelessness increases. A strong homelessness response system depends on having housing options available for people with the lowest incomes, including individuals, families, kūpuna, and people with disabilities. When the supply of affordable housing is too limited, people remain in shelters, transitional programs, or unsheltered situations for longer periods because there are few places they can realistically move into. Continued investment in affordable housing development, operating support, rental subsidies, and partnerships across government, nonprofit, and private sectors is essential to reduce homelessness and create more stable pathways to long-term housing.

2. INCREASE PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING: Expand housing linked with supportive services for people with disabling conditions and long histories of homelessness. Permanent supportive housing is especially important for individuals who face the greatest barriers to housing stability, including those living with serious mental illness, chronic substance use, physical disabilities, chronic health conditions, or repeated episodes of homelessness. Ongoing supportive services such as case management, behavioral health care, medical care coordination, benefits assistance, and tenancy support can help individuals remain housed and avoid returns to homelessness. Increasing the supply of permanent supportive housing can reduce pressure on emergency shelters, improve health and housing outcomes, and provide a more effective long-term response for people with the highest needs in the homelessness system.

3. MAINTAIN RAPID RE-HOUSING AND LONG-TERM RENTAL SUBSIDIES: Continue rapid re-housing, housing navigation, flexible assistance, and rental subsidies that help people exit homelessness and remain housed. Maintaining both rapid re-housing and ongoing rental assistance allows the homelessness response system to meet a wider range of needs and improves the likelihood that people can exit homelessness successfully without returning to it.

4. EXPAND HOMELESS PREVENTION AND DIVERSION: Strengthen diversion and prevention so families and individuals can avoid homelessness when safe alternatives exist. Prevention resources are critical as housing costs remain high and rental options remain limited. Expanding prevention and diversion can reduce inflow into the homelessness system, preserve limited shelter capacity for those with no other options, and help households resolve housing crises before they become longer-term episodes of homelessness.

5. EXPAND STREET OUTREACH AND SHELTER TRANSITIONS: Increase outreach coverage and strengthen transitions from emergency and transitional shelters to permanent housing. Street outreach is often the first connection to housing, health care, documentation, and other critical services. At the same time, improving shelter transitions means ensuring that emergency and transitional housing programs are not endpoints, but part of a coordinated system that helps people move as quickly as possible into stable permanent housing. Continued investment in outreach teams, coordinated entry, case management, transportation assistance, and housing navigation can help reduce the length of time people remain unsheltered and improve overall system effectiveness.