

WHAT THE 2023 HUD ANNUAL HOMELESS ASSESSMENT REPORT MEANS FOR FLORIDA

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In 2010, Florida saw its highest homeless count, with 57,551 people reported as experiencing literal homelessness in the HUD Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR). Mid-December 2023 marked the release of the 2023 AHAR by HUD, revealing a notable achievement for Florida: a 46.6% decrease in homelessness since 2010, with 30,756 individuals experiencing homelessness in the past year. This accomplishment reflects the collective efforts of our state. Yet, it also underscores the ongoing need to further our endeavors and refine our systems to effectively prevent and eradicate homelessness among all Florida residents.

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In 2023, twenty-six out of twenty-seven Continuums of Care (CoCs), encompassing 96% of Florida CoCs, reported increased unsheltered homelessness. The 2023 AHAR documented 15,482 individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness in Florida, indicating that they were residing on the streets, in vehicles, or other unsuitable living conditions. Of particular concern is the fact that older adults constitute more than a third of this unsheltered population, with 4,989 individuals (32%) aged 55 years or older. This underscores the urgent need for targeted interventions to address homelessness among older adults.

While five CoCs across Florida reported a reduction in overall homelessness (both sheltered and unsheltered) from 2022 to 2023, the majority, comprising 81.5% of Florida CoCs, reported an increase in overall homelessness.

FLORIDA HAS THE SECOND-HIGHEST COUNT OF THOSE EXPERIENCING UNSHELTERED HOMELESSNESS

4% OF THE NATION'S UNACCOMPANIED HOMELESS YOUTH RESIDE IN FLORIDA

14 OUT OF EVERY 10,000 PEOPLE IN FLORIDA EXPERIENCED HOMELESSNESS

FROM 2022 TO 2023, FLORIDA EXPERIENCED ONE OF THE LARGEST INCREASES IN VETERAN HOMELESSNESS (12%)

HENDRY, HARDEE, AND HIGHLANDS COUNTIES HAVE SOME OF THE NATION'S HIGHEST RATES OF UNSHELTERED HOMELESSNESS

Additional key data points on Florida and its homeless population from the 2023 AHAR are as follows:

On a single night in January 2023:

- Nationwide, Florida had the second-highest count of those experiencing unsheltered homelessness, with a total of 6% (15,482) of the nation’s unsheltered homeless population.
- Hendry, Hardee, and Highlands Counties of Florida had some of the nation’s highest rates of unsheltered homelessness, with 88% of the homeless population being unsheltered. Notably, these are rural counties with significantly fewer resources than more developed and urban communities.
- 53% of people experiencing homelessness reside within four states, with Florida ranking third highest, accounting for 5% (30,756) of the nation’s homeless population. California leads with 28% of the nation’s homeless population.
- 14 out of every 10,000 people in Florida experienced homelessness.
- Although Florida was among the five states with the largest decrease in homelessness between 2007 to 2023, it ranks among the five states with the largest increase in homelessness from 2022 to 2023, with an increase of 18.5% (4,797).
- 4% (1,213) of the nation’s unaccompanied homeless youth were identified in Florida, with 473 of those experiencing unsheltered homelessness.
- Florida accounts for 7% of

the entire homeless veteran population in the United States.

- Florida experienced one of the largest increases in veteran homelessness, with 12% (279) more veterans homeless in 2023 compared to 2022.
- Florida had the second-largest increase in chronic patterns of homelessness, with 1,167 more individuals experiencing chronic homelessness from 2022 to 2023.

WHAT WE KNOW WORKS

A balanced housing ecosystem means all households have their housing needs met. In Florida, that proves difficult in every county. Presently, only 23 affordable housing units are available for every 100 extremely low-income renters in Florida. The statistics provide a bleak snapshot of the current affordable housing landscape. However, that has not deterred the communities, organizations, local governments, and legislators from working to meet the housing demand. The work is about scaling effective solutions.



During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) was pivotal in maintaining stable housing for households and averting homelessness as eviction moratoria ended. Robust ERAP initiatives, along with long-term voucher programs for housing expenses like the Emergency Housing Vouchers, have proven effective in preventing homelessness while offering crucial support to extremely low-income households burdened by high housing costs. Sustaining and expanding these programs, alongside efforts to augment the supply of affordable housing for those with extremely low incomes, will continue to reduce the incidence of homelessness among Floridians.

In 2023, the Live Local Act was passed in a legislative response to Florida’s affordability crisis. The Act’s passage and recent changes aim to bolster access to affordable housing and enhance the quantity and quality of safe, affordable housing options, thereby addressing the acute housing crisis prevalent across Florida. Florida’s affordable housing trust fund, homeless assistance grants, and other housing initiatives were funded at over \$900 million this legislative season.

People with the lowest incomes are impacted the most by housing unaffordability. Addressing housing unaffordability also means dedicating efforts to promote upward economic mobility. Expanding workforce housing initiatives, facilitating homeownership programs for low-income homebuyers, and gradually increasing wages will collectively contribute to the state’s success in fostering a balanced housing ecosystem where all households have their housing needs met.

For perspective, \$49.35 per hour represents the income necessary for individuals to afford housing in Florida’s costliest rental market, namely the Miami-Fort Lauderdale-West Palm Beach MSA (Florida Housing Coalition, Inc., 2023). Presently, rental and homeownership remain out of reach for those employed in

entry-level or service industries across the state. It is worth noting that individuals working in the homeless service and housing crisis system often contend with low wages, which further imperil their own housing stability.

The data clearly demonstrates the need, but it also demonstrates the effectiveness of some of Florida’s approaches to addressing the housing needs of people facing housing instability. Communities, organizations, legislators, and advocates must leverage federal, state, and local funding and programs to scale permanent housing solutions.

Additional information on the 2023 AHAR



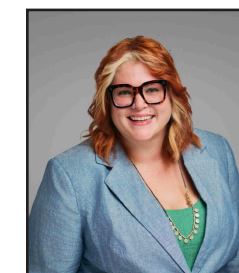
2023 AHAR: Part 1 2023 AHAR: Part 1 - PIT Estimates of Homelessness in the U.S. | HUD USER



NAEH Blog HUD Releases 2023 AHAR Data: 12 Key Data Points to Understand the Current State of Homelessness in America - National Alliance to End Homelessness



NLIHC Memo to Members HUD Releases 2023 Annual Homeless Assessment Report | National Low Income Housing Coalition



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