

**Humboldt County
2011 Point-in-Time Count
Executive Report**



**Humboldt Housing and
Homeless Coalition**

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Introduction:

In January 2011, the Humboldt Homeless and Housing Coalition (HHHC) conducted a Point-In-Time (PIT) Count of the county's homeless population. The purpose of the Point-In-Time Count is to obtain an unduplicated count and some basic information about homeless people. This information is used to assess the effectiveness of the services the community provides and identify service gaps for future planning. Previous counts were conducted in 2005 and 2009.

Methodology:

Over 40 agencies and trained volunteers participated in gathering data for the 2011 PIT Count using a structured survey that can be self-administered or administered as a structured interview. The survey was voluntary and was administered to homeless individuals who were contacted by volunteers on the streets, in rural encampments, and through local agencies and service providers. The survey asks homeless individuals about their current living situation, geographic location, length of time they have been homeless, age, gender, race/ethnicity, their personal long and short-term history, and overall physical, social, and mental health. To ensure complete confidentiality, each completed survey was given a unique identifier consisting of the first two letters of the respondent's last name and their date of birth.

The PIT Count indicated the number of individuals who were homeless on the night of Tuesday, January 25th, 2011. The survey was conducted over the course of three days, on January 26th, 27th, and 28th. Survey results were entered and analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

All surveys that listed family members were hand-sorted and data-entered separately, to avoid duplication. An individual was determined to be homeless with family if they answered "Yes" to the question "Are you homeless with family?" and/or if they listed (or were among those listed as) family members with whom they were homeless on the night of the 25th in the space provided.

Because participation in the survey was voluntary, respondents had the right to decline giving an answer to any question. As a result, only a certain percentage of those interviewed responded to any given question. Questions that were left blank in which "decline to state" was not selected were treated as missing. Questions answered as "decline to state" are treated as valid data responses. An additional number of missing responses were due to family members that were counted as homeless, but not qualified to be interviewed ($n=562$). Percentages reported below are based on valid responses (excluding missing data).

Results

A total of 1,626 individuals were determined to have been homeless on the night of the count, January 25th, 2011.¹ 1,062 surveys were collected, and an additional 564 individuals were counted as family members. It was determined that there was no duplication of individuals

¹ In only three cases, volunteer interviewers indicated they were unsure if a respondent was homeless. These three cases were included in the final homeless count.

counted by collecting date of birth and the first two letters of the individuals last name as “unique identifiers.”²

Results for age, living situation, geographic location, and family status are reported in the section below (Section I: General Living Conditions). The next section reports physical, mental, and social well-being, as well as the length of time spent homeless, and past and present experiences related to homelessness (Section II: Descriptive Information about Population). The final section provides a comparative analysis of relationships between certain sub-populations of homeless individuals, including women, children, youth, veterans, racial/ethnic minorities, and those with severe mental illness, chronic substance abuse, histories of domestic violence, and the chronically homeless (Section III: Group Comparisons).

Section I: General Living Conditions

This section reports the age, family status, living situation, and geography of all counted individuals. These are the only categories where family members were treated as respondents based on their reported age, and the geographic location and living situation of the associated family member interviewed. Table 1 at the end of this section (pg. 4) shows the numbers and percentages reported below.

Age

Out of the 1,626 homeless individuals counted, a total of 451 (30%) were children, and 1,064 (70%) were adults.³ Of the children, 18 percent ($n=272$) were between the ages 6 and 17 and 12 percent ($n=179$) were age 5 and under. Though the majority of the homeless were adults, slightly more than 1 in 4 were under 18 years old (Figure 1).

The mean age of the total homeless population was approximately 30, with the youngest being less than a year old, and the oldest, 88 years old. The mean age of children (under 18) was 8 years old, and adults (18 and over), 40 years old.

345 individuals (21% of the total population) were within the Humboldt County Transitional Age Youth Coalition’s (HCTAYC) age range of 12 and 26 years old. A small percentage of children ($n=39$, 2%) were identified as “unaccompanied youth,” based on their reported age (under 18), and whether they were determined to have been homeless with a family member.⁴

² Two cases showed possible duplication based on identical data in these criteria. However, since several other responses were not identical these cases were treated as unduplicated.

³ Roughly seven percent ($n=111$) did not report age or date of birth.

⁴ Three cases for unaccompanied youth were found among those in the “under age 5” category. This was most likely the result of interviewer error in recording date of birth, as responses to other questions consistently seemed to indicate these surveys came from adults (ex: one respondent in the under 5 category was reported as having served in the US Military).

Families

Over half of the total population (52%, $n=846$) was part of a homeless family. Of them, 412 individuals and children (25% of the total population) were homeless in families with minor children.

These individuals were part of 320 families that were identified as homeless. The majority of these families had minor children ($n=188$, 59%).

Living Situations

The living situations of homeless individuals were varied. The most common situation was “doubling up” with friends or family (20%, $n=327$), while the next highest percentages were camping (20%, $n=319$) and living in the motels (17%, $n=283$). Populations living in vehicles (9%, $n=152$), transitional living facilities (9%, $n=138$), and emergency shelters (8%, $n=124$) were also represented in relatively large proportions.

Geography

The vast majority of the homeless population (60%, $n=978$) resided in the Eureka area. The Arcata area (including McKinleyville) accounted for a population of 257, almost sixteen percent of the total. McKinleyville reported counting 77 homeless individuals (5%), while the City of Arcata showed the second highest homeless population (11%, $n= 180$).

Comparative results from 2011, 2009, and 2005 are reported for these geographic areas (Table 1). The figures below shows consistent numbers of homeless individuals in Eureka and Arcata for 2009 and 2011, but fewer in Fortuna, McKinleyville, Southern Humboldt, and other locations in the county. It also shows an overall decrease in the number of homeless between 2009 and 2011.

Tables 1 and 2: Humboldt PIT Count Population Area Comparison and General Living Conditions

	Total (n, %)	Adults	Children
Eureka	978, 60%	646	320
Arcata	257, 16%	199	52
Fortuna	91, 5%	62	24
So. Humboldt	64, 4%	43	19
Other	62, 4%	42	20
Unknown (missing)	174, 11%	72	16
Total	1,626	1,064	451

* Percentages are rounded to the nearest ten

** Total reporting age (adult or child) equals 1,515

Age	Number	Percent
Adults	1,062	70%
Children (6-17)	272	18%
Children (5 & Under)	179	12%
HCTAYC (12-26)	345	21%
Unaccompanied Youth	39	2%
Families		
Individuals in Families	846	52%
Individuals in Families with Minor Children	412	25%
Families/Households	320	--
Families/Households with Minor Children	188	59%
Geography		
Eureka	978	60%
Arcata/McKinleyville	257	16%
Living Situations		
Doubled Up / Living with Friend or Family	327	20%
Camping	319	20%
Motel	238	17%
Car	152	9%
Transitional Living Facility	138	9%

*Percentages are reported based on number of respondents per question.

**Not all numbers equal 100% of counted population.

Section II: Descriptive Information about Population

This section reports descriptive information about the homeless population. Frequencies of responses are reported for only the 1,062 counted individuals who were interviewed and returned surveys, and does not include data on homeless family members. Table 2 at the end of this section (pg. 7) shows percentages and numbers reported below.

Race and Gender

Respondents' race was available for approximately 54% of the total reported count. Of those who provided responses, the majority were White (62%, $n=542$) and male (63%, $n=604$). Approximately 11 percent was American Indian/Alaska Native ($n=99$) and another eight percent were American Indian/Alaska Native and White ($n=66$). These two groups accounted for the largest racial minority represented in the count. The third largest racial minority was Asian and White (7%, $n=58$).

Health

Between 822 and 902 individuals (50-60% of the total sample) answered questions about their overall social, physical, and mental well-being. Of those who provided responses, nearly half (45%, $n=401$) reported having a physical disability and/or "mental health issues" (50%, $n=446$). A smaller but substantial percentage (24%, $n=190$) self-reported "serious mental health issues." 43 percent reported that they had a documented, permanent disability (43%, $n=385$). Nearly 30 percent (30%, $n=270$) of the responding population reported having alcohol issues, and a comparable percentage (28%, $n=252$) reported drug use issues. 20 percent (20%, $n=168$) reported chronic substance abuse. A small percentage of the population had HIV/AIDS (2%, $n=18$), and over three quarters (76%, $n=660$) had been tested for HIV/AIDS. Almost 37 percent (37%, $n=328$) reported they were survivors of domestic violence, and roughly 22 percent (22%, $n=140$) reported that their current homelessness was the result of domestic violence.

Time Homeless

28 percent of the population met the definition of individual chronic homelessness⁵ ($n=254$), and eight percent ($n=74$) for family chronic homelessness. While 26 percent of the population ($n=227$) was born in Humboldt County, 66 percent ($n=577$) became homeless in Humboldt County, and 80 percent of the total ($n=711$) became homeless in California. Most respondents had been in Humboldt County for greater than ten years (40%, $n=377$), while a substantial minority was shown to have been in the county for less than a year (23%, $n=217$). Over half of homeless families had been in the county for greater than ten years (51%, $n=126$).

⁵ According to HUD, chronic homelessness is based on permanent disability status, in addition to one year or more of ongoing homelessness, at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years.

Education & Income

Most respondents completed high school or completed General Education Development (GED) (36%, $n=326$), while 28% did not complete high school ($n=251$) and 26% completed some college or trade school ($n=238$).

A large majority of the population (74%) reported earning a monthly income of of \$1,000 or less per household, while a small minority (12%, $n=99$) reported income of over \$1,000 per month. 24 percent ($n=205$) reported household income of between 0 and \$100 per month, and 23 percent ($n=196$) reported a monthly income between \$800 and \$1,000.

The most common sources of income were SSI/Disability (29%, $n=247$) and food stamps (27%, $n=235$). Other common sources of income were Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) (13%, $n=109$), Earned Job Income (10%, $n=87$), General Relief (7%, $n=64$), and SSI/Retirement (7%, $n=61$). Only 4% received Veterans Affairs Disability (4%, $n=34$).

Table 3: Descriptive Information About Population

Race	Number	Percentage
White	542	62%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	99	11%
American Indian/Alaskan Native <i>and</i> White	66	08%
Asian <i>and</i> White	58	7%
Gender		
Male	604	63%
Female	339	36%
Health		
Physical Disability	401	45%
Documented Permanent Disability	385	43%
Mental Health Issues	446	50%
Serious Mental Health Issues	190	24%
Alcohol Issues	270	30%
Drug Use Issues	252	28%
Chronic Substance Abuse	168	20%
HIV/AIDS	18	2%
Tested for HIV/AIDS	660	76%
Survivor of Domestic Violence	140	37%
Homelessness due to Domestic Violence	140	22%
Time Homeless		
Individual, Chronically Homeless	254	28%
Family Chronic Homeless	74	8%
Born in Humboldt County	227	26%
Became Homeless in Humboldt County	557	66%
Became Homeless in California	711	80%
Resident of Humboldt County > Ten Years	377	40%
Resident of Humboldt County < One Year	217	23%
Member of Homeless Family & Lived in Humboldt County > Ten Years	126	51%
Education		
Did Not Complete High School	326	36%
GED/H.S. Diploma	251	28%
Some College or Trade School	238	26%
Income		
1,000 or Less Per Month	636	74%
More than 1,000 Per Month	99	12%
SSI/Disability	247	29%
Food Stamps	235	27%
TANF	109	13%
Earned Job	87	10%
General Relief	64	7%
SSI/Retired	61	7%
VA Disability	34	4%

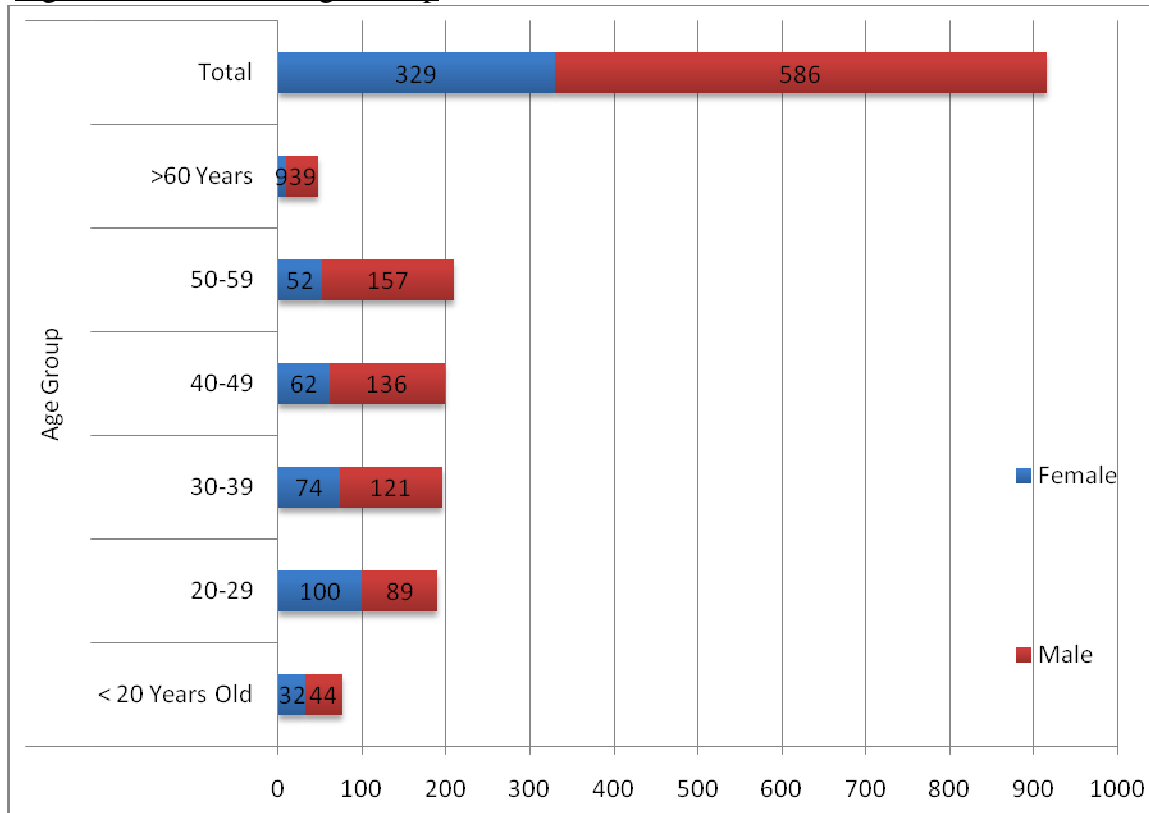
Section III: Group Comparisons

Section III draws comparisons between groups. It details the distribution of men and women by age group, and the percentages of children, adults, and other sub-populations by geographic area, living conditions, and county of birth. It also shows the geographic areas and general living conditions of homeless families with children, women, transition age youth, and veterans. Comparison tables are shown at the end of this section (Tables 4-10).

Gender & Age

Of the 915 individuals who disclosed both gender and age, 64 percent were male and 36 percent were female. Starting at age 20 and older, the number of homeless women decreased with age, while the number of homeless men increased with age (Figure 1). Men outnumbered women in all age groups except the 20-29 year old category, which had a slight majority of women (52%, $n=100$).

Figure 1: Gender and Age Group



Race & Shelter

The number of sheltered individuals was higher than unsheltered individuals among all racial groups, except Asian (56%, *n*=5), Asian and White (52%, *n*=30), American Indian or Alaska Native and Black or African American (82%, *n*=9), and those who indicated only Tribal Affiliation (100%, *n*=3) (Table 4). However, percentages of respondents by race for any given question were roughly consistent with the proportion from the total sample.

Geography and Health

More homeless individuals in Eureka self-reported mental health issues than did not (55%, *n*=290), as did nearly half of those in Arcata (48%, *n*=68). Almost 27 percent of those in Eureka also reported chronic substance abuse (*n*=134) (Table 5).

Geography, Living Situations, and HCTAYC

Most youth in the HCTAYC (Humboldt County Transition Age Youth Collaboration) age range (12-26) had been homeless for more than a year (41%, *n*=69), or from one to three years (28%, *n*=47) (Table 5), and most lived in Eureka (64%, *n*=207). The largest percentage of youth reported staying with friends or family (30%, *n*=104), camping (19%, *n*=66), or staying in a motel (18%, *n*=62) (Table 6).

Geography and Living Situation

The largest proportions of homeless in Eureka were living in motels (23%, *n*=228), with friends or family (18%, *n*=174), or camping (14%, *n*=140). In Arcata, the plurality of homeless reported camping (41%, *n*=73) (Table 6).

Gender & Living Situations

The living situations in which more women than men were represented were: motels, where nearly twice as many women (20%, *n*=68) than men (6%, *n*=38) were staying, and “trailer/RVs,” where 11 women (3%) and three men (.5%) indicated they had stayed. Most men were camping (34%, *n*=202), while most women were staying with friends or family (24%, *n*=80) (Table 7).

Geography, Children & Families

The majority of all children interviewed were born in Humboldt County (under age 5: 100%, *n*=3; age 6-17: 57%, *n*=13), as were 25 percent of adults (*n*=206).

Geographic location was consistent for adults and children; the greatest proportions of both lived in Eureka. The next highest proportion of adults was in Arcata (adults: 15%, *n*=151; children: 6%, *n*=24), while the next highest proportion of children was in McKinleyville (adults: 4%, *n*=48; children: 6%, *n*=28). Moreover, while McKinleyville had a lower homeless adult population, it had a higher population of homeless children (Table 8). McKinleyville also had

the highest percentage of family homelessness (73%, $n=56$), followed by Eureka (62%, $n=608$) (Table 9).

Gender, Foster Care & Veterans

Of all adults who were interviewed, approximately 20 percent ($n=171$) were veterans, or had served in the U.S. Military. Three percent of all women were veterans ($n=10$), compared to over a quarter of all men (28%, $n=158$).

About 25 percent of adults ($n=214$), and 20 percent of children between ages 6 and 17 ($n=5$), had spent time in the foster care system (Table 10).

Table 4: Shelter Status By Race

Shelter Status	Race								
	White	American Indian/Alaskan Native	American Indian or Alaska Native and White	Asian and White	Asian	Black	Black or African American and White	Am. Indian or Alaska Native & Black or African American	Other Multiple Race Combinations
Un-Sheltered	221 41%	37 38%	20 32%	30 52%	5 56%	5 39%	6 46%	9 82%	16 49%
Sheltered	245 45%	40 40%	30 48%	18 31%	1 11%	5 39%	6 46%	1 9%	12 36%
Doubled Up	75 14%	22 22%	13 20%	10 17%	3 33%	3 22%	1 8%	1 9%	5 15%
Total	541 100%	99 100%	63 100%	58 100%	9 100%	13 100%	13 100%	11 100%	33 100%

*Percentages are rounded to the nearest ten.

Table 5: Health and HCTAYC Age by Location

Overall Health	Eureka	Arcata
Mental Health Issues	290 55%	68 48%
Chronic Substance Abuse	134 27%	13 10%
Within the HCTAYC Age Range	207 60%	47 14%

*Percentages are rounded to the nearest ten.

Table 6: Time Homeless by HCTAYC

Time Homeless	HCTAYC -Transitional Age Youth
Less than 7 days	2 1%
More than 7 days	20 12%
More than 1 year	69 40%
1 to 3 years	47 28%
More than 3 years	17 10%
Unknown	8 5%
Decline to answer	5 3%
Total	199 100%

*Percentages are rounded to the nearest ten.

**Only 168 (49%) of HCTAYC age range youth provided valid responses for time homeless

Table 7: Living Situations by Location, HCTAYC, and Gender

Living Situations	Eureka	Arcata	HCTAYC	Female	Male
Camping	140 14%	73 41%	66 19%	62 18%	202 34%
Car	80 8%	30 17%	20 6%	28 8%	66 11%
Emergency Shelter (Eureka Rescue Mission, Arcata Night Shelter, Our House, etc.)	94 10%	22 12%	8 2%	15 5%	90 15%
Transitional (MAC, Arcata House, Bridge House, Vets House, Launch Pad, etc.)	115 12%	17 10%	43 13%	36 11%	41 7%
Clean & Sober House	71 7%	1 1%	11 3%	15 5%	29 5%
Friend/Family (Only if homeless)	174 18%	29 16%	104 30%	80 24%	89 15%
Motel (Only if day to day, county, agency OR homeless part of the month)	228 23%	5 3%	62 18%	68 20%	38 7%
Serenity Inn	36 4%	0 0%	12 4%	10 3%	16 3%
Other-Sheltered	11 1%	0 0%	2 1%	8 2%	12 2%
Other-UNsheltered	9 1%	2 1%	5 2%	3 1%	14 2%
"Trailer/RV/Camper"	17 2%	0 0%	10 3%	11 3%	3 1%
Total	975 100%	179 100%	343 100%	336 100%	600 100%

*Percentages are rounded to the nearest ten.

Table 8: Geographic Location and Age

	Children	Adults
County of Birth: Humboldt	16 62%	206 25%
Geographic Area		
Southern Humboldt (South of Rio Dell)	19 4%	43 4%
Fortuna area (Includes Ferndale, Loleta, and Carlotta)	24 6%	62 6%
Eureka area (Includes King Salmon, Fields Landing, and Samoa)	320 74%	646 65%
Arcata area (Includes Bayside, Blue Lake, and Manilla)	24 6%	151 15%
McKinleyville area (Includes Fieldbrook)	28 6%	48 5%
Northern area (Includes Trinidad, Westhaven, and Orick)	4 1%	3 1%
North East area (Includes Kneeland, Willow Creek, and Hoopa)	16 3%	34 3%
Out of Humboldt (Includes Trinity and Del Norte Counties, and Oregon)	0 0%	5 1%
TOTAL	435 100.0%	992 100.0%

*Percentages are rounded to the nearest ten.

Table 9: Families by Geography

Family Homelessness	Eureka	Arcata	McKinleyville
Individuals in Homeless Families	608 62%	55 31%	56 73%
Individuals in Families with Children	303 31%	22 13%	28 37%

Table 10: Military & Foster Care by Age and Gender

Military	Adults	Female	Male
	171	10	172
	20%	3%	20%
Foster Care	Adults	Children	
	214	7	
	25%	20%	
Military	Adults	Female	
	171	10	
	20%	3%	
Foster Care	Adults	Children	
	214	7	
	25%	20%	

Evaluation:

These results show the minimum amount of people who did not have permanent housing the night of January 25th, 2011. Not every houseless person was counted, nor were the people who declined to participate in the survey. There were fewer volunteer interviewers for the 2011 Count than in 2009. There were also fewer agencies that could make a commitment to assisting in the count. Despite efforts to outreach to all homeless individuals and families, not everyone was counted.

In rural areas there tends to be more “hidden” homeless; individuals and families that are living in vehicles, campers, doubled-up, living in substandard housing, or camping deep in the forest. While accessing these populations for survey research is difficult, efforts were made to reach these hidden populations. Homeless individuals were offered the option to call and participate in a telephone interview, as advertised before the Count in local media. Trained volunteers conducted surveys in various camps throughout Humboldt County.

This year’s questionnaire was similar to the survey instrument used in 2009. Minimal changes were made to the survey to accommodate HUD requirements, and to improve the validity of the results. The 2011 survey was altered as little as possible, so that the 2009 and 2011 data would be comparable. The wording and format of some questions were changed to increase the validity of 2011 results. Questions regarding history of domestic violence and veteran status were slightly changed from the 2009 survey, to assess its relationship to homelessness, as defined by the person. In 2009, it was asked, “Are you a veteran?” In 2011, this question was changed to “Have you ever served in the U.S. Military?” In addition, the 2009 question regarding domestic violence was phrased, “Has anyone ever told you or have you ever thought that you have been a recent victim of domestic violence?” In 2011 this question was changed to include two parts: “Are you a survivor of domestic violence?” and “Is your current homelessness because you are a

survivor of domestic violence?” Therefore, the 2009 and 2011 results regarding domestic violence were not comparable.

To make it easier to collect data on family members, the format for gathering information on this demographic was revised. In 2009, the ages of children were grouped 0-5 and 6-17, and the interviewer recorded how many children were in each age group. Instead of grouping by age, the 2011 survey had space for respondents to write in age, and results were then re-grouped to show comparison.

Although it may seem like a challenge to conduct an exact Point-In-Time Count of the homeless population, the 2011 count was comprehensive and productive because of the immense effort put forth by the community to count those who did not have a permanent home on the night of January 25th, 2011.

The HHHC recognizes the great work of the Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program (HPRP). HPRP funding comes from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA). In Humboldt County the HPRP program is called Humboldt Housing Now. In 2010 alone, Humboldt Housing Now helped 188 households with security deposits, and 265 households with rental assistance.⁶ In many cases, HPRP prevented households from becoming homeless and/or ending their homelessness.

Several factors contributed to the success of the 2011 Point-In-Time Count. The HHHC hired a PIT coordinator, Rachel Fuentes, MSW who facilitated a PIT subcommittee, assisted in updating the survey instrument, trained interviewers, and served as a liaison to all survey sites and community participants. The PIT Committee reviewed maps and organized volunteers to ensure that geographic areas were covered by a survey volunteer.

⁶ Numbers reported from the HPRP 2010 quarterly reports.

Participating Agencies, Organizations, and Tribes

Several Humboldt County agencies, organizations, and tribes put forth effort. In addition to those listed, several community members assisted in the count. The HHHC recognizes the time and energy of all those who participated, and sincerely appreciates the commitment to ending homelessness.

Alcohol Drug Care Services, Inc. (Serenity Inn)
Arcata House, Inc.
Bear River Band of the Rohnerville Rancheria
Humboldt All Faith Partnership (Arcata Night Shelter)
Humboldt County Department of Health and Human Services
 General Relief and Eligibility Programs
 Hope Center
 Public Health, North Coast AIDS project, CHOW, NorCap
Eureka Rescue Mission
Eureka Seventh Day Adventist
Eureka Veterans Clinic
Fortuna Community Services
Food for People
Garberville Food Pantry
Humboldt County Office of Education
 School districts throughout Humboldt County
 Eureka City Schools Homeless Education Program
Humboldt Domestic Violence Services
Humboldt County Library
Humboldt State University, Social Work Student Association
McKinleyville Family Resource Center
North Coast Resource Center
North Coast Substance Abuse Council (Crossroads)
North Coast Veterans Resource Center
Orick Community Resource Center
Redway Family Resource Center
Redwood Community Action Agency
 Multiple Assistance Center
 Youth Service Bureau
 Raven and Launch Pad
Street Outreach Services
St. Vincent de Paul Dining Room
St. Joseph Community Resource Centers, Eureka, Rio Dell, Loleta, Willow Creek,
United Way (Humboldt County Switchboard)
Wiyot Tribe
Womens Crisis Shelter in Southern Humboldt (WISH)
Yurok Social Services