2024 POINT-IN-TIME COUNT RESULTS REPORT

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Dufferin county

CONTENTS

OVERVIEW

On November 26 and 27, 2024, Dufferin County conducted its Point-in-Time (PiT) Count as part of the mandatory requirements for Reaching Home Community Entities. The PiT Count is a community measure of sheltered and unsheltered individuals experiencing homelessness. It provides data at the community level and provides additional insight for the national landscape of homelessness.

This report reviews the background and methodology of the 2024 PiT Count, and the findings from the 49 individuals surveyed. A glossary can be found at the end of the report for review of common terms or acronyms.

61 Experiencing Homelessness	49 Screened in and Surveyed

Review Principles & Important Notes

- The PiT Count and Survey collects important data on homelessness in a 24-hour period spanning two calendar days. It's important to understand it has limitations and may not include all individuals experiencing homelessness in the community, or what is impacting them. Individuals may cycle in and out of homelessness, or experiences of hidden homelessness may not be included in the PiT Count.
- Samples sizes of surveys differ year to year. This should be considered when reviewing the findings.
- Survey questions may have changed over the years which make some comparisons difficult.
- Survey questions are not created by those who adminster the survey to individuals.
- Some of the findings are based on total respondents, and others are based on total responses. For example, a question may ask respondents to select all categories that apply.
- Respondents sometimes choose not to answer questions, or they provide an answer of "I Don't Know." This will be reflected in the findings, and has impacts to the findings.
- All charts in the report are for 2024.
- Consider these findings as one element of the larger and complete landscape of homelessness in the community.

DUFFERIN PROFILE

Total Population:
2024 - 72,400

Median Household Income:
2023 - $116,400

Indigenous Identity:
2021 - 2%

Located in Central Ontario, Dufferin County is one of the fastest growing regions in Ontario.

Visible Minority:
2021 - 16%

Median Age:
2021 - 40

Average Cost of Dwelling:
2021 - $877,000

By-Name Data List
Q1 2025 - 55

Ontario Works Caseload
Q1 2025 - 692

Housing Waitlist Average
Q1 2025 - 659

Q1 2025 are averages for the quarter*

Sources:
(Census, 2021)
(Dufferin Community Services Activity Report Q1 2025)
(Statistics Canada, 2025)

BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

Background

On November 26 and 27, 2024, Dufferin County conducted its Point in Time (PiT) count as part of the mandatory requirements for Reaching Home Community Entities. Enumeration and the PiT Count Survey are two distinct portions of this process. PiT Count Enumeration involves a count of individuals within the Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS) at a given time. Dufferin County has participated in PiT Counts since 2016.

The PiT Count Survey involves a more interactive count of individuals through community partners, walk-ins, field visits, and phone calls, that includes a survey. If individuals consent to participating in the survey, they answer questions about their history of homelessness, contributing factors, demographics, health, onset, duration, and current shelter situation.

PiT Counts can increase a community's ability to take action towards ending homelessness by:

- Ensuring the comprehensiveness of the By-Name Data List (BND List).

- Identifying the characteristics of the local homeless population.

- Identifying where progress is being made and where refocusing of effort is required.

- Increasing public awareness about homelessness.

Methodology

Dufferin County, Choices Shelter and Support Services, and Family Transition Place all conducted surveys. Twelve sector workers assisted with the survey. This includes completing surveys at non-residential agencies as well as with those individuals that are in encampments. Surveys were conducted using HIFIS 4, and recorded in HIFIS 4.

Thank you to all those who made the
PiT Count and Results Report possible

Demographics

Respondents answered various questions on age, family composition, veteran status, gender identity and sexual orientation, First Nations identity, racial identity, and immigration and origin. The results are discussed below.

Age
- The average age of respondents during the count was 42 with a range of 18 to 68.
- The average age that respondents first experienced homelessness was 35.
- 12% of respondents first experienced homelessness before 18 years of age. This is another sharp decline from past PiT Count surveys.
- In the 2016 and 2018 PiT Counts, youth and young adults (under 25) made up significantly more of respondents. Adding to that, in 2018 the majority of respondents first experienced homelessness under 18 years of age (64%).

Age of First Homelessness Experience

- Did Not Answer
- 12-17 Years Old
- 18-24 Years Old
- 25-49 Years Old
- 50-65 Years Old
- 65+ Years Old
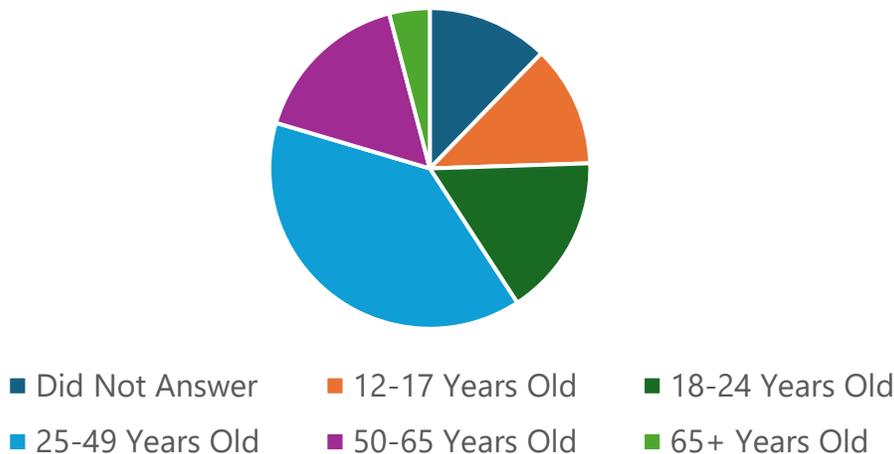
Family Composition
- 12% of respondents reported family members would be staying with them during the count (tonight or last night).

Veteran Status
- 2% of respondents reported serving in the Canadian Military or RCMP. This is an increase from the PiT Count in 2021 (0%).

Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation
- Those identifying as men made up 67% of respondents vs. 52% in 2021, 50% in 2018, and 44% in 2016.
- Those identifying as women made up 31% of respondents vs. 39% in 2021, 45% in 2018, and 54% in 2016.
- 10% of respondents identified with a sexual orientation other than straight/heterosexual which is similar to 2021, and 2018 data.

Sexual Orientation
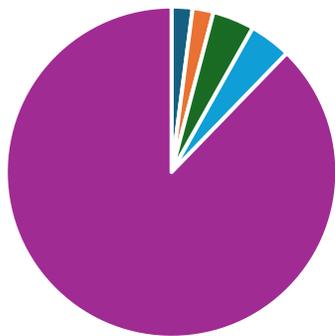
- Bisexual
- Lesbian
- Straight/Heterosexual
- Did Not Answer
- Pansexual

Gender You Identify With
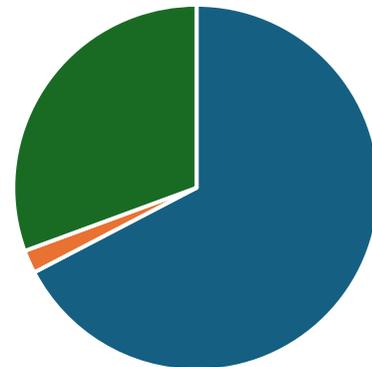
- Man
- Non-Binary (Genderqueer)
- Woman

First Nations Identity
- 10% of respondents identified as First Nations (First Nations and Metis). In 2021, no respondents identified as First Nations and in 2018, 18% identified as First Nations.
- Those identifying as First Nations are overrepresented in comparison to the general population. The 2021 Census found about 2% of Dufferin County identifies as being Indigenous.

First Nations Identity
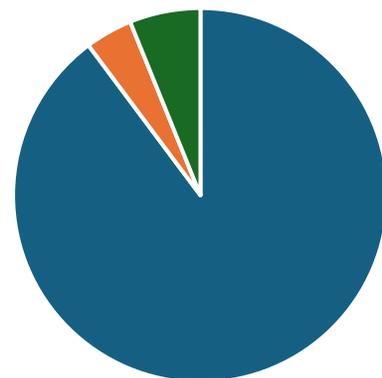
- No
- First Nations
- Metis

FINDINGS

Racial Identity
- Respondents selected all additional racial identities that applied to them, for a total of 49 responses. 14% of responses included Arab, Black-African, Black-Canadian/American, Asian South/Indo Caribbean, and Black-Afro-Caribbean/Afro-Latinx racial identities. 26 respondents Did Not Answer.

Racial Identity

- Arab
- Asian-South/Indo Caribbean
- Black-African
- Black-Afro-Caribbean/Afro-Latinx
- Black-Canadian/American
- White
- Did Not Answer
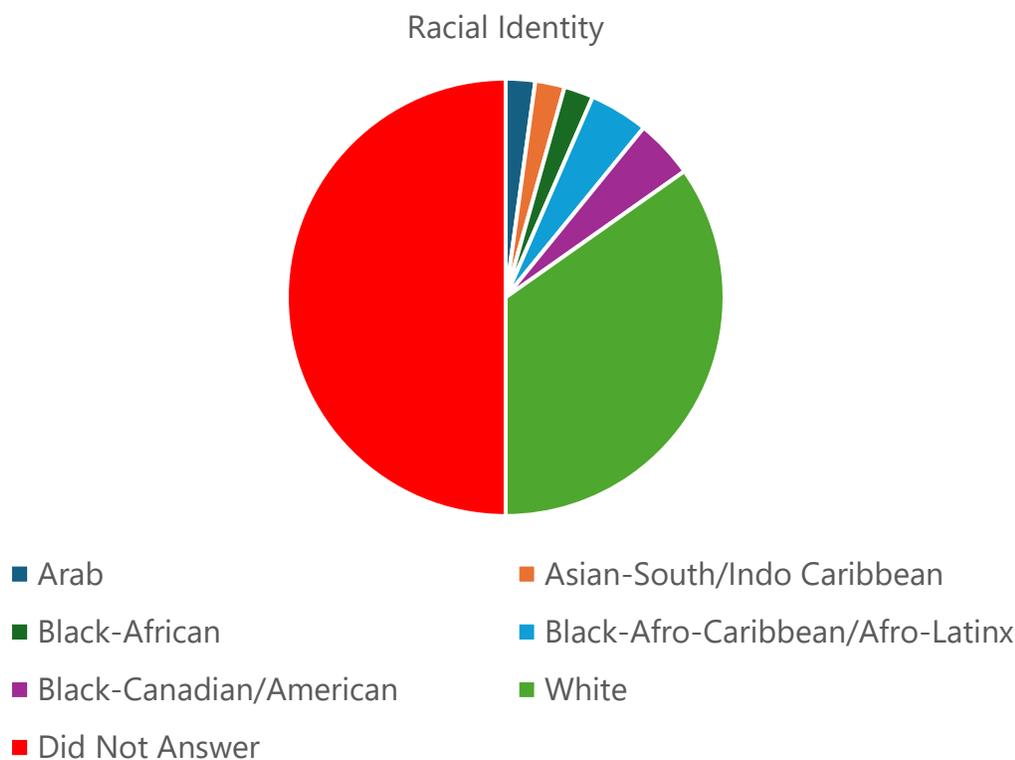
Immigration & Origin
- 8% of respondents reported living in other countries before living here.
- 2% of respondents reported coming to Canada as an immigrant and 4% as refugees.
- 10% of respondents reported prior living in other provinces.
- 38% of respondents reported prior living in other Ontario cities outside of Dufferin County, within approximately 150km radius.
- 41% of respondents reported always living here, and roughly that amount of individuals did not answer other questions in relation to where else individuals have lived. In past years, 13% (2021) and 7% (2018) reported always living here.
- 20% of respondents reported living here for less than one year vs. 13% in 2021 and 46% in 2018.

Health

Respondents answered various questions about difficulties with their physical and mental health, as well as learning, intellectual/developmental or cognitive function.
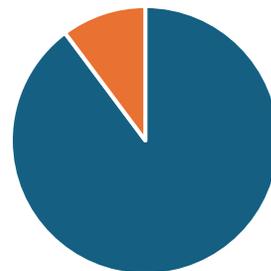
Physical Health and Medical Conditions
- 24% of respondents reported having difficulities with an illness or medical condition (ex: Diabetes, Tuberculosis, HIV).
- 29% of respondents reported having difficulties with physical mobility issues (ex: spinal chord injury, arthritis, or limited movement or dexterity).
- 10% of respondents reported having difficulties with an acquired brain injury (ex: due to accident, violence, overdose, stroke, or brain tumour).
- 47% of respondents reported having difficulties with substance use (ex: alcohol or opiates).
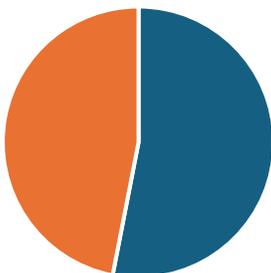
Physical Mobility
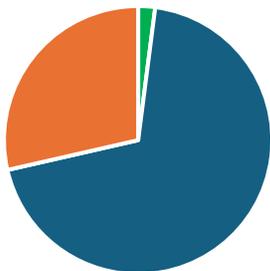
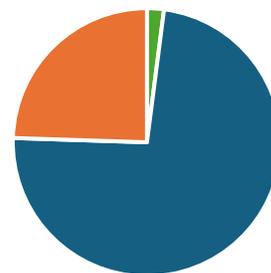■ Don't Know ■ No ■ Yes

Acquired Brain Injury

■ No ■ Yes

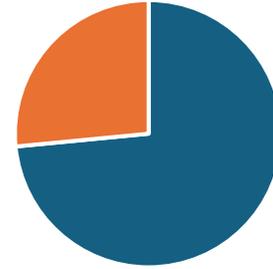### Substance Use

■ No ■ Yes

Illness or Medical Condition

■ Did Not Answer ■ No ■ Yes

- 27% of respondents reported having difficulties with senses such as seeing or hearing.

Senses (Hearing, Seeing etc.)

■ No ■ Yes

Learning, Intellectual/Developmental, or Cognitive Function

- 37% of respondents reported having difficulties with Learning, Intellectual/Developmental or Cognitive Function (ex: fetal alcohol syndrome, autism, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, dyslexia, dementia).

Learning, Intellectual/Developmental or Cognitive Function
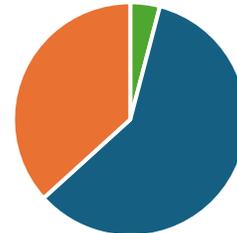
■ Don't Know ■ No ■ Yes

Mental Health (diagnosed/undiagnosed)

- 63% of respondents reported having difficulties with Mental Health (ex: depression, post traumatic stress disorder, biopolar, schizophrenia).

Mental Health (diagnosed/undiagnosed)

■ No ■ Yes

Barriers to Housing
Respondents answered questions about their loss of housing and source of income.

Most Recent Loss of Housing
(Does not include temporary arrangements like couch-surfing or shelter stays)
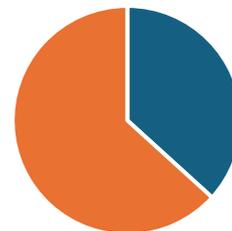- Not Enough Income for Housing was the most reported reason for a recent loss of housing at 21% of responses. Respondents selected all reasons that applied for a total of 58 selections from 49 individuals.
- The next highest causes for loss of housing were due to relationship breakdown: Parent/Guardian (19%) and Spouse/Partner (17%).
- It is difficult to compare to the prior PiT Counts as questions and answers have changed.

Cause of Most Recent Loss of Housing

Category	Value
Unfit/Unsafe Housing Condition	6
Substance Use Issue	2
Spouse/Partner	10
Physical Health Issue/Disability	2
Parent/Guardian	11
Owner Moved In	2
Not Enough Income for Housing	12
Mental Health Issue	2
Landlord	5
Incarceration	1
Hospitalization or Treatment Program	1
Death or departure of Family Member	1
Complaint (Noise/Damage)	3
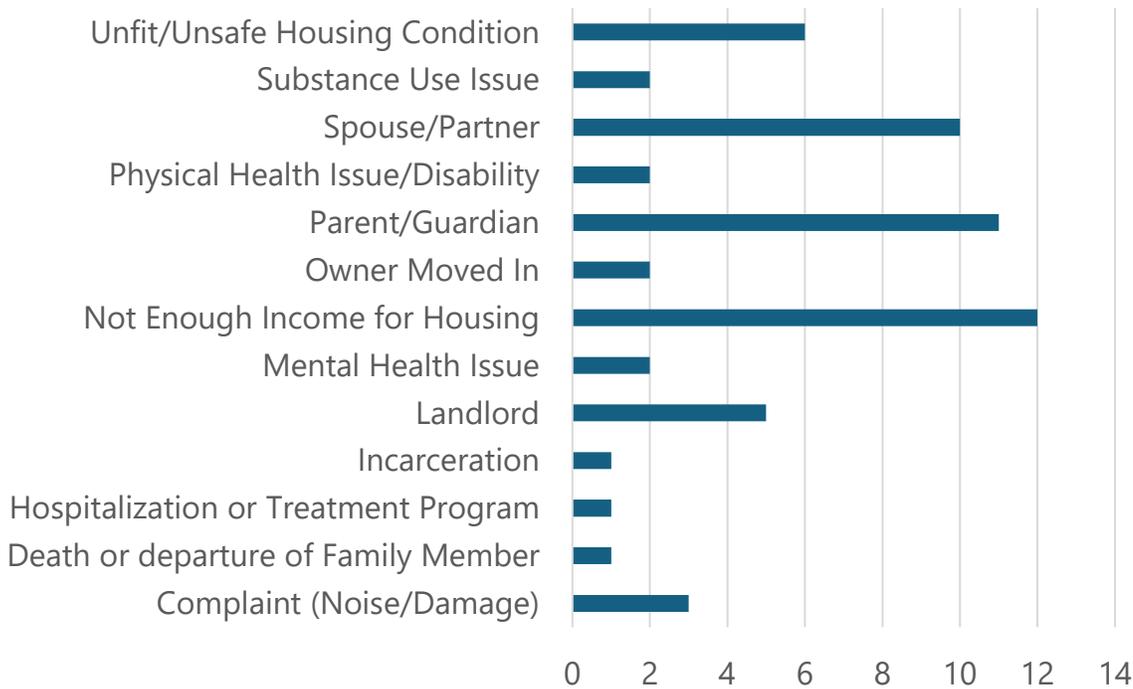
Digging deeper, if loss of housing causes were divided into broader categories of Family, Health, Landlord/Tenant, Income, Housing Condition, and Incarceration, Family comes in at the highest at 38%, and Income is second with the same 21%, and Landlord/Tenant third at 17%. It should be noted that the broader categories do not have equal amount of feeder selections (Ex: Income has 1, Family has 3, Health has 4 etc.). This can be explored further below:

| Category	Percentage
Family **(Spouse/Partner, Parent/Guardian, Death or Departure of Family Member)**	38%
Income **(Not Enough Income for Housing)**	21%
Landlord/Tenant **(Owner Moved In, Landlord, Complaint -Noise/Damage)**	17%
Health **(Substance Use Issue, Physical Health Issue/Disability, Mental Health Issue, Hospitalization or Treatment Program)**	12%
Housing Condition **(Unfit/Unsafe Housing Situation)**	10%
Incarceration	2%

- Categories in order of highest to lowest response (top to bottom).
- On another question, 41% of respondents reported their recent housing loss was related to eviction. This might suggest respondents were evicted, but in relation to the categories here.

Source of Income
- Respondents were requested to select all of their sources of income. 53 selections were recorded.
- Social assistance was the most common selection at 32%. This was the highest source in 2021 (39%), 2018 (41%) and 2016 (31%).
- 28% of responses indicated income from employment (full-time, part-time, casual) and another 4% from EI. Employment as income is a higher percentage than 2021 (26%), 2018 (13%), and 2016 (8%).
- Disability Benefit was the second highest at 13% but that compares to 35% (2021), 30% (2018), 29% (2016).

Source of Income
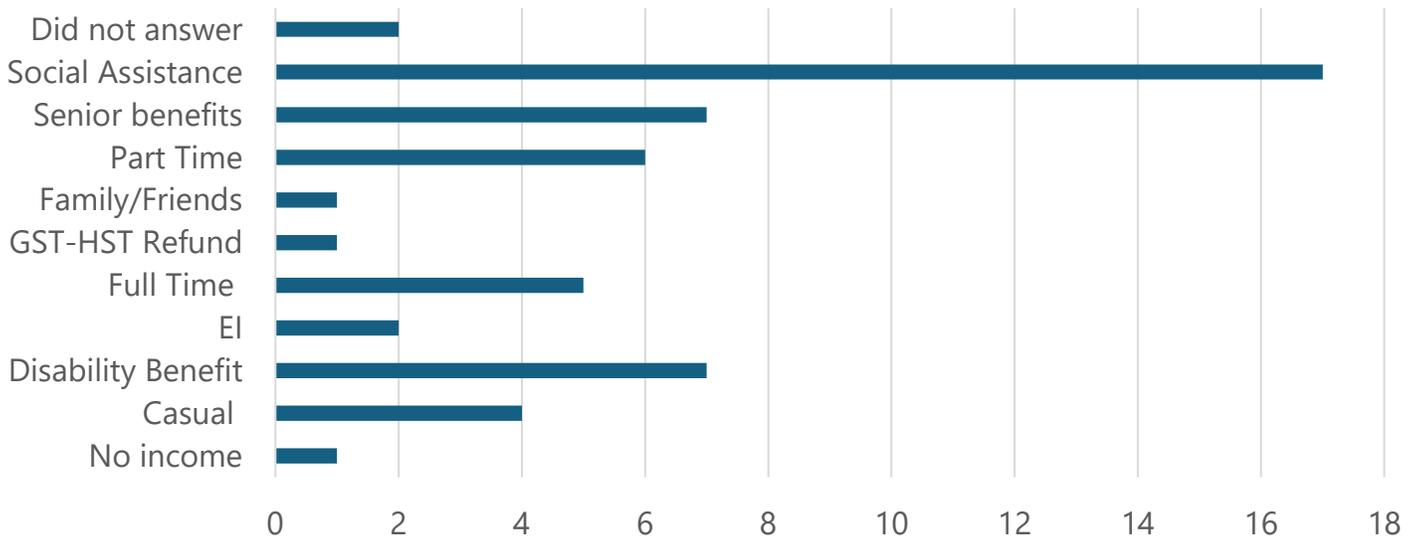
Duration
Respondents answered questions about the length of time they've experienced homelessness.

Recent Duration
- Respondents recent duration of homelessness ranged between 2 days and 4 years.
- The average duration was 250 days.
- 34% of respondents reported homelessness for 6 months or more in the last year.

Duration of Recent Housing Loss

■ Under 30 Days   ■ 30-89 Days   ■ 90-364 Days
■ 1-2 Years   ■ 3 Years or more
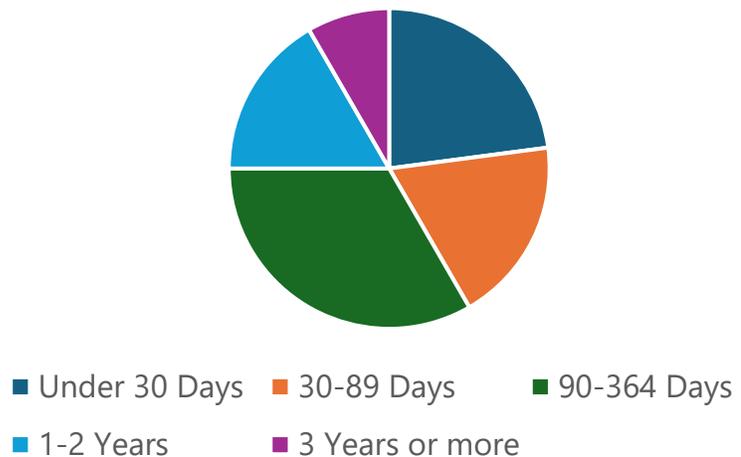
Chronic Homelessness and Homelessness in the Last 3 Years
- 57% reported they experienced homelessness less than half of the time in the last 3 years, and 33% half or more.
- Chronic homelessness refers to individuals who are currently experiencing homelessness AND who meet at least 1 of the following criteria:
  - They have a total of at least 6 months (180 days) of homelessness over the past year.
  - They have recurrent experiences of homelessness over the past 3 years, with a cumulative duration of at least 18 months (546 days).
- By definition, at least 34% of respondents have experienced chronic homelessness.

How much time did you experience homelessness in the past 3 years?

■ Don't Know ■ About Half or More ■ Less Than Half
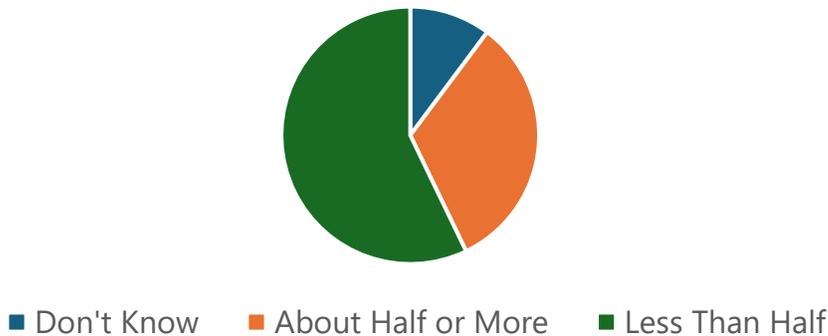
Current and Past Stay Locations
Respondents answered several questions on where they were currently staying, and where they have stayed in the past.

Last Night and Tonight Stays
(Data is for the same night. If question took place on second calendar day it was asked as "last night")
- 65% of respondents reported they had or would be staying in homeless shelters (ex: Emergency, Family or Domestic Violence Shelter, Warming Centre). This compares to 17% in 2021, and 43% in 2018 and 2016.
- Hotel/Motel funded by City or Homeless Program was the next highest at 12% of respondents.
- 6% were staying completed unsheltered vs. 22% in 2021, and 9% in 2018.

Tonight and Last Night Stay

■ Encampment
■ Homeless Shelter
■ Hotel/Motel Funded by City or Program
■ Someone Else's Place
■ Unsheltered in a Public Place
■ Vehicle
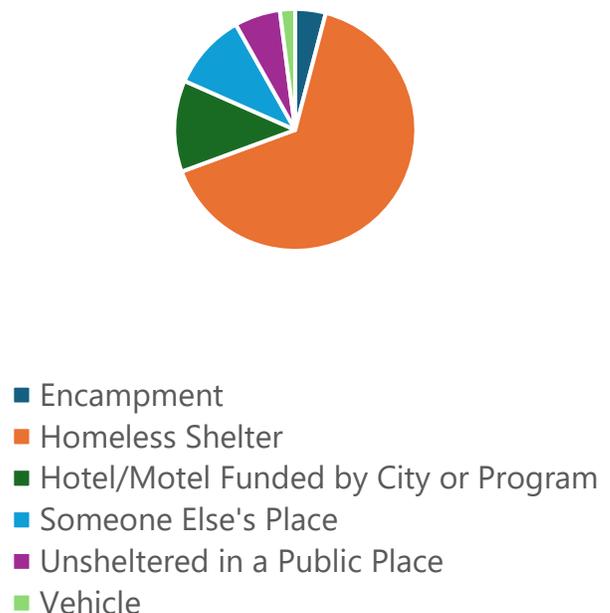
Stay Locations in the Last Year
- Respondents selected all locations they stayed at for at least one night. 99 responses were provided.
- 34% of responses were for Homeless Shelters.
- 17% was the next highest for Someone Else's Place.

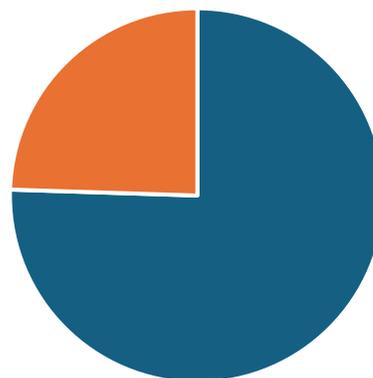**Stay Locations for at Least One Night in the Last Year**

Service Usage

Respondents reported other important service usage during youth.

- 24% of respondents reported being in foster care or a youth group home as a child or youth.
- This is a similar finding to the 2021 PiT Count (22%) but less than the 2018 PiT Count (36%).

Foster Care and Youth Group Home History

■ No ■ Yes

DISCUSSION AND KEY THEMES

County of Dufferin fufilled its federal and provincial requirements for the PiT Count in 2024. The PiT Count provides a snap-shot of people experiencing homelessness in the community on November 26 and 27, 2024. 61 individuals were identified in the count, and 49 of those individuals consented to survey questions.

This survey provided important data, and the following points may be considered for further discussion:

- Social Assistance and Disability benefits continue to be the main source of income for respondents of the PiT Count Survey. Income remains the highest reported cause of losing housing.
- Those identifying as First Nations were overrepresented as 10% of respondents. Those identifying as Indigenous make up about 2% of Dufferin County's population (Census, 2021).
- Those identifying as men continue to grow their majority through 2018, 2021, and now 2024.
- Age of current episode and initial onset of homelessness continues to rise away from youth through 2021, and now 2024. Youth made up majorities in 2016 and 2018.
- 41% of respondents reported always living in Dufferin. In past years, 13% (2021) and 7% (2018) reported always living here.
- Homeless Shelters were the most reported form of stay for current and past stays.
- Respondents report a high incidence of physical, mental, and cognitive issues. Disability benefits were the second most common source of income for respondents, but were less than half of the reported percentage of 2021, 2018, and 2016.

NEXT STEPS AND CONSIDERATIONS

Homelessness is experienced by people of all ages and backgrounds. Anyone can experience homelessness. Various factors contribute to homelessness as can be seen in the findings of this report. It is a complex matter, and requires a holistic response.

The results of the PiT Count will be used to inform objectives, targets, and outcomes for the County of Dufferin and its partners. The PiT Count provides important data that can be utilized for service delivery, planning, and implementation purposes.

With this in mind, County of Dufferin and its partners have explored and begun implementation of several initiatives. These initiatives seek to plan and create additional housing units, integrate health and human service delivery, and continue organizational commitments to Community, Governance, and Equity. These intitiatives are:

- Dufferin County Strategic Plan 2023-2026   2023
- Dufferin County Master Housing Strategy   2024
- 236 First St. Opening - Services and Housing in the Province   2024
- Dufferin Housing and Homelessness Task Force   2024
- Health and Human Services Hub - Edelbrock Centre   2025
- Homeless and Addiction Recovery Treatment Hub - Edelbrock Centre   2025
- Youth Wellness Hubs Ontario - Dufferin Child and Family Services - Edelbrock Centre   2025

GLOSSARY

BND List: Formerly the BNL (By-Name List), the By-Name Data List provides an accurate account of individuals experiencing homelessness in Dufferin County.

Chronic Homelessness: refers to individuals who are currently experiencing homelessness AND who meet at least 1 of the following criteria:
*   they have a total of at least 6 months (180 days) of homelessness over the past year.
*   they have recurrent experiences of homelessness over the past 3 years, with a cumulative duration of at least 18 months (546 days).

Choices: Choices Shelter and Support Services.

Dufferin Housing and Homelessness Task Force: In late 2024, County Council adopted a motion for the creation of the Dufferin County Homelessness Task Force. The mandate of the Dufferin County Homelessness Task Force is to identify innovative and sustainable options that will provide housing and support services to the unhoused in Dufferin County.

Emergency Sheltered: Includes those staying in overnight shelters for people who are homeless, as well as shelters for those impacted by family violence. Emergency shelters are facilities that provide short-term temporary accommodations and essential services for individuals experiencing homelessness.

FTP: Family Transition Place.

HART Hub: Homeless and Addiction Recovery Treatment hubs are designed to connect individuals experiencing homelessness, addiction, and/or mental health issues with comprehensive services. Led by Services and Housing in the Province (SHIP), a hub is proposed at the Edelbrock Centre.

Health and Human Services Hub: Dufferin County is working with the Hills of Headwaters Collaborative Ontario Health Team and other partners to create a Health and Human Services Hub at the Edelbrock Centre. This initiative aims to enhance the community's well-being by providing integrated, equitable and accessible social, human and health care services for Dufferin residents.

HIFIS: Homeless Individuals and Family Information System is a comprehensive data collection and case management system allowing multiple service providers to access real-time homelessness data.

Homelessness: The situation of an individual or family who does not have a permanent address or residence; the living situation of an individual or family who does not have stable, permanent, appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect, means and ability of acquiring it. It is often the result of what are known as systemic or societal barriers, including a lack of affordable and appropriate housing, the individual/household's financial, mental, cognitive, behavioural or physical challenges, and/or racism and discrimination.

GLOSSARY

Housing Waitlist: Housing Access Dufferin maintains the Centralized Wait List for community housing in Dufferin.

Master Housing Strategy: A comprehensive plan designed to address the evolving housing needs of Dufferin's residents.

OW: Ontario Works.

PiT Count: A Point-in-Time Count is a coordinated event where persons experiencing homelessness are counted at a given time.

Reaching Home: A federal initiative under Canada's Housing Plan and the National Housing Strategy that provides funding and support to communities to address their local homelessness needs.

Transitional Housing: Dufferin Coordinated Access (CA) defines a Transitional Housing placement as housed for the purpose of the By-Name Data List (BND List). If a client remains a Transitional Housing placement and returns to immediate homelessness, they will return to the By-Name Data List with the status they had upon entering the Transitional program. The time spent in the program will not count towards overall days of homelessness as per the Reaching Home directives definition of Chronic Homelessness.

Youth Wellness Hubs Ontario: High-quality integrated youth services that support the well-being of young people aged 12 to 25, including mental health and substance use supports, primary health care, community and social supports, and more. Led by Dufferin Child and Family Services, a hub is proposed at the Edelbrock Centre.

236 First Street – Services and Housing in the Province: The newly developed site that opened in May 2024 provides a crucial response to housing and homelessness. The 27-unit building includes 25 studio units for individuals and 2 two-bedroom units for families. The residents have access to onsite services designed to support stability and well-being through collaboration between SHIP, County of Dufferin and Family Transition Place (FTP).