

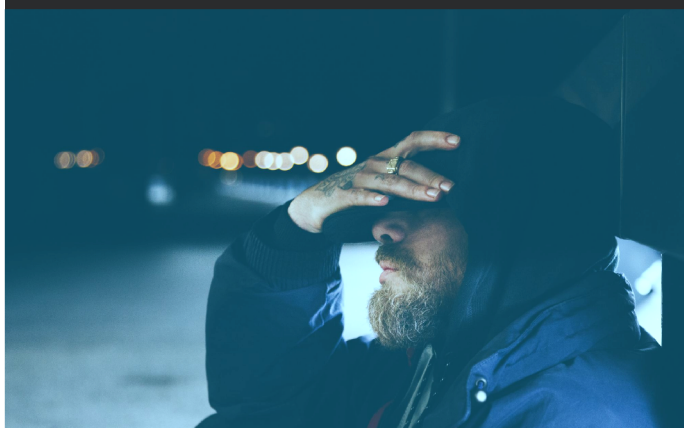


RESULTS REPORT



**2021 Point-in-
Time Count**

July 2021



**Funded in part by the Government of Canada through Reaching Home:
Canada's Homelessness Strategy**

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SUMMARY & KEY FINDINGS

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The Point-in-Time (PiT) Homelessness Count is a coordinated event where persons experiencing homelessness are counted and asked a variety of questions to get a snapshot in time to illustrate homelessness in the community. This report provides background information, covers the count methodology, and shares the overall findings as well as findings from specific sub-populations. It also includes a discussion section and next steps/points around moving forward.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and Public Health guidelines, the 2020 PiT Count was postponed to take place in 2021. The 2021 PiT Count proceeded differently than it has in previous years.¹ Despite the challenges presented by the pandemic, the Dufferin County 2021 Point-in-Time Count accurately includes an enumeration of individuals experiencing homelessness. The count was conducted by volunteers/staff from the homeless-serving system over a two day period, on April 21 & 22, 2021, throughout the County of Dufferin.

The PiT Count is one tool of many which collects data that identifies trends and key issues related to homelessness in the County and helps to measure progress on the Housing and Homelessness Plan. The By-Name List (BNL) and Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP) data are also critical pieces of information so that the County, and service partners, can be informed in planning and making changes and decisions for housing related programs and services. The results of the count will be used to fulfill provincial and federal reporting requirements.

Thirteen (13) trained volunteers/staff were involved in this year's count. Participants were asked screening questions to ensure that they met the Canadian definition of "homeless" before volunteers/staff proceeded with the survey. Questions focused on the respondent's experiences on April 21 & 22 only, in alignment with the methodology of a PiT Count. Survey results were captured in real time using laptops, smartphones and tablets that were set up to link directly to the PiT Count module in the Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS) software.

KEY FINDINGS

23

Out of the 32 people encountered during the Count, 23 individuals screened in, met the definition of homelessness, and completed the survey

35%

35% reported staying at a transitional shelter. 22% reported being completely unsheltered (staying in parks, on the streets, in vehicles, etc.)

52%

52% reported that some sort of conflict caused them to lose their housing most recently. Unfit/unsafe housing conditions was chosen by 26% of respondents

74%

74% reported that they had mental health issues. 52% reported having a substance use issue.

Homelessness: Homelessness is 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 discrimination²

Chronic homeless: Refers to individuals who are currently experiencing homelessness AND who meet at least 1 of the following criteria:

- have a total of at least 6 months (180 days) of homelessness over the past year
- have recurrent experiences of homelessness over the past 3 years, with a cumulative duration of at least 18 months (546 days)²

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 homelessness²

Hidden Homelessness: Refers to people who live temporarily with others but without guarantee of continued residency or immediate prospects for accessing permanent housing (e.g. couch surfing)³

Housing First: A recovery-oriented approach to ending homelessness that centers on quickly moving people experiencing homelessness into independent and permanent housing followed by provision of additional supports and services as needed

Permanently housed: A family or individual is considered 'permanently housed' if their housing situation meets one of the following criteria:

- There is no designated length of stay
- Rent is being paid month to month in a room or motel
- They have a tenancy agreement that provides them protection under the Residential Tenancy Act
- They are living in a family members home and there are is no designated length of stay
- They have accepted Chronic Homeless Housing Allowance Program (CHHAP) support
- They have accepted a subsidy or housing allowance through another agency

Transitional Housing: Dufferin Coordinated Access (CA) defines a Transitional Housing placement as homelessness for the purpose of the By-Name List (BNL). If a client exits a Transitional Housing placement and returns to immediate homelessness, they will remain on the BNL 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

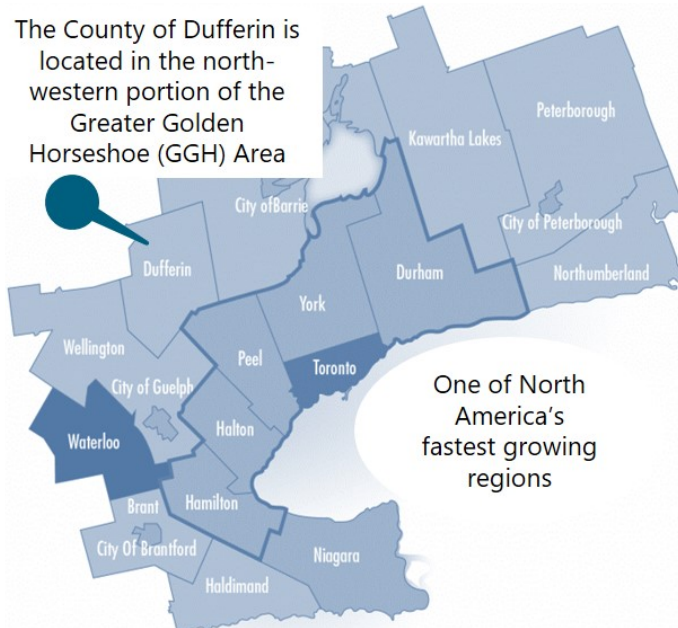
Youth: Includes those aged 16-24 years at the time of the survey. Dependent youth or children who were residing with their parents or guardians were not included

THE DUFFERIN CONTEXT

04

Dufferin County is home to almost 62,000 people⁴ and is comprised of eight local municipalities. The town of Orangeville is our community's largest municipality. For the purpose of this Count, "Dufferin" was treated as one area.

The County of Dufferin is located in the north-western portion of the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH) Area



One of North America's fastest growing regions

Made up of **1,486** square kilometers and **8** towns and townships:

- Amaranth
- East Garafraxa
- Grand Valley
- Melancthon
- Mono
- Mulmur
- Orangeville
- Shelburne



40.7

Median age of the population in Dufferin County

Dufferin is predicted to have **85,000** residents by 2041

Dufferin County's population as of 2016
61,735

65%

of the population reside in the three main urban centres of:



Grand Valley
population growth from 2011 - 2016
8.4%

Orangeville
population growth from 2011 - 2016
3.3%

Shelburne
population growth from 2011 - 2016
39%

IF DUFFERIN COUNTY WAS A VILLAGE OF 100 PEOPLE



45

tenant households would spend more than 30% of their household income on shelter costs⁵



73

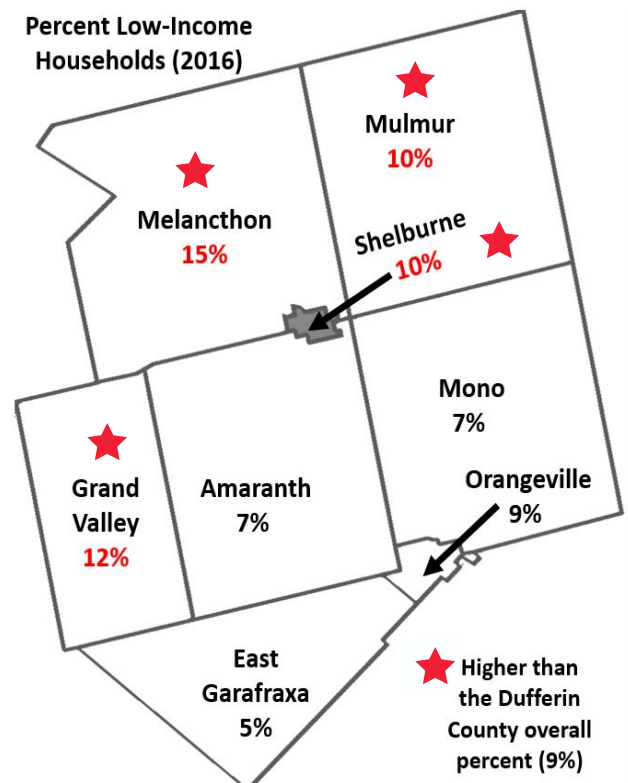
of those 15+ would commute outside of their municipality for work



11

of the children age 5 and younger would live in low income households

Percent Low-Income Households (2016)



In 2018, the Government of Canada announced the redesign of the previous Homelessness Partnering Strategy into Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy, a federal funding program. It was launched in 2019. Designated communities that receive funding from Reaching Home are working toward a 50% reduction in chronic homelessness over the next decade.²

Dufferin County receives funding under Reaching Home. Under the program, the Government is working with communities to develop and deliver an outcomes-based approach. Communities must report publicly on outcomes.

The first milestone in reducing chronic homelessness is a Quality By-Name List (BNL). A BNL is a real-time list of all people experiencing homelessness in a community. Dufferin County implemented its BNL in 2019. Dufferin was able to create the BNL with support from the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness Built-for-Zero-Canada Campaign and Federal funding as part of the Reaching Home program. In October 2020, Dufferin was recognized as having achieved an Advanced Quality BNL.

Another tool to track data and support communities in reducing chronic homelessness is the PiT Count. Coordinated PiT Counts are community initiatives that take place in partnership with the federal and provincial governments. They provide vital information to communities about individuals experiencing homelessness, helping to identify their needs and plan community resources accordingly. Along with many other communities, Dufferin County previously conducted two PiT Counts/Registry Weeks, one in 2016⁶ and another in 2018⁷. PiT Counts can increase a community's ability to take action towards ending homelessness by:

- Ensuring the comprehensiveness of the BNL of people experiencing homelessness
- 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

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and Public Health guidelines, the Coordinated 2020 PiT Count was postponed to take place in 2021. Between March 1 and April 30, 2021, Everyone Counts 2021, the third nationally coordinated PiT Count of homelessness was conducted in partnership with communities across Canada.

In light of the pandemic, the 2021 PiT Count was conducted in accordance with Public Health guidelines. Numerous changes from the 2018 count were made to reduce the risks of COVID-19 infection. This includes using less volunteers/staff, promoting over the phone surveys where possible, ensuring that volunteers/staff adhere to appropriate Infection, Prevention and Control (IPAC) measures including appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

This report presents the results of the 2021 Point-in-Time Count in Dufferin County. It provides information about people who were identified as homeless during the two-day count period and compares the results with the previous counts where it is possible to do so.

PLANNING FOR THE 2021 PiT COUNT

Dufferin County is served by a steering committee called the Community Advisory Board (CAB). The CAB includes a range of partners from the public, not-for-profit and private sectors. These partners work together to develop plans for ending homelessness in our community. For the 2021 PiT Count, the Coordinated Access Table (CAT) acted as the committee to assist with planning the event. This table already meets weekly to discuss homelessness in Dufferin County. The table consists of Family Transition Place (FTP), Choices Youth Shelter, the Dufferin Area Family Health Team (DAFHT), Salvation Army, Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) Peel Dufferin, the Lighthouse, the County of Dufferin, Services and Housing In the Province (SHIP), and White Owl Native Ancestry. All committee members worked together to ensure consistency across the project.

The flyer for the PiT Count was approved by the Federal Government and a Dufferin Social Media campaign was completed. Communication about the PiT went out on all County Social Media Channels and the website.

VOLUNTEER/STAFF RECRUITMENT & TRAINING

In the 2018 and 2016 PiT Count/Registry Weeks, efforts were made to recruit volunteers from different sources, including general community members. However, with the COVID-19 pandemic, it was necessary to scale down and have less volunteers. Instead, the human services sector was leveraged for their assistance because of their experience interacting with vulnerable populations during COVID-19. As such, a total of 13 volunteers/staff were recruited to participate in the count. All of the volunteers/staff came from local service providers and due to COVID restrictions there were no community members. A breakdown of volunteers/staff is as follows:

- The County of Dufferin - 5
- Dufferin Area Family Health Team - 3
- Services and Housing In the Province - 3
- Choices Youth Shelter - 1
- Family Transition Place - 1

PiT Count flyer



**Are you sleeping in a shelter, on the streets or couch-surfing in Dufferin County?
If yes, we want to talk to you!**

The County of Dufferin is completing a Point in Time Count on April 21 & 22, 2021.

Federal Point-in-Time (PiT) Counts are coordinated community efforts to enumerate (or count) the homeless population in a given community at a given time.

The information collected will be used to:

- direct resources to areas of greatest need
- connect people and families with specific backgrounds with supports to help them with stable housing
- increase understanding of homelessness in Dufferin County

Survey may be conducted in person or by phone, it takes about 15 minutes and it is completely voluntary. Due to COVID restrictions, phone surveys are encouraged.

Surveys may be completed– April 21 & 22, 2021

In Person

30 Centre Street at the County of Dufferin Community Services Office
8:30 am – 11:00 am

By Phone

County of Dufferin
Please Call 519-941-6991 x 2110
8:30 am – 4:30 pm

Choices Youth Shelter
Please Call 519-940-5687
8:30 am – 4:30 pm

Family Transition Place
Please Call 519-942-4122
8:30 am – 4:30 pm

Services and Housing in the Province
Please call 519-307-8700
8:30 am – 4:30 pm

Clients who participate will be eligible to receive an honorarium for their time.

This project is funded in part by the Government of Canada.

Canada



PiT Count social media post



The County of Dufferin is completing a Federal Point-in-Time Count on April 21 & 22 to collect information regarding the homeless population in Dufferin. This information is collected either in person or by phone via a survey in an effort to better direct resources to areas greatest in need, increase understanding of homelessness in Dufferin and more. Visit <https://www.dufferincounty.ca/-/files/housing/PiT.pdf> for more information.



VOLUNTEER/STAFF RECRUITMENT & TRAINING (CONT.)

Due to the pandemic, free training was provided remotely online by ACRE Consulting E-Learning. The online training included lessons, videos, resources and a toolkit. All volunteers/staff learned how to properly complete the survey with respondents in HIFIS and the County of Dufferin received a copy of their certificates for completing the training.

SURVEY PROCESS & ADMINISTRATION

As the survey was administered through HIFIS, there were no administrative costs associated with the PiT Count for survey administration. Volunteers/staff used laptops, smartphones and tablets to complete the survey in HIFIS. All survey responses were recorded "live" on the devices and data collected was immediately submitted into HIFIS.

The Government of Canada recognizes that the pandemic necessitated certain adaptations to the usual PiT Count methodology. It was recommended that local Public Health guidelines be considered when determining which COVID-19 adaptations may apply in the community. Therefore, due to the pandemic, survey methodology differed from the 2016 and 2018 counts. The survey process for Wednesday April 21 & Thursday April 22, 2021 was as follows:

- DAFHT connected with individuals on the BNL
- FTP and Choices Youth Shelter surveyed those in their shelters and were available to take phone surveys
- Services and Housing In the Province (SHIP) had staff available by phone to complete surveys
- The County of Dufferin had staff available for both in person surveys (8:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.) and phone surveys (8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.) on Wednesday April 21 & Thursday April 22, 2021

All of the above organizations involved were available to complete surveys on Wednesday April 21 & Thursday April 22, 2021 by phone from 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. All other human service partner agencies were encouraged to participate by connecting any clients they work with, identifying as homeless, to one of the above organizations. DAFHT and County staff stationed themselves outside known locations that individuals who are experiencing homelessness in the community tend to visit (e.g. the Lighthouse) and DAFHT workers also attended transitional units at local motels. Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health Guidelines were adhered to at all times to ensure the safety of the volunteers/staff and the respondents.

Surveys were administered with individuals experiencing homelessness on Wednesday April 21 & Thursday April 22, 2021. Volunteers/staff were instructed to survey everyone they encountered, contacted or who phoned in on these days, using questions from a screening tool to determine whether or not the person they were interviewing was experiencing homelessness.

SUVERY PROCESS & ADMINISTRATION (CONT.)

Individuals who reported being unsheltered, or staying in an emergency shelter or a transitional shelter, were screened in and included in the survey. Respondents who reported staying at their own home or were staying long term at someone else's place were screened out. These individuals were thanked for their time, but were not further surveyed.

The Dufferin County 2021 Point-in-Time Count survey included two sections:

1. Federal/Provincial Enumeration Survey – an anonymous survey provided by the Government of Ontario and the Government of Canada. The recommended Hidden Homeless core question was used in this section along with a number of other questions from the survey
2. VI-SPDAT – a common assessment tool that uses a standardized scoring system to assist communities in determining the appropriate level of intervention for the homeless individual or family. The By-Name List intake questions were added into this section and asked as well

Individuals experiencing homelessness (screened in) were invited to complete both sections of the survey. To ensure participants remained anonymous, no identifying information was collected for the Enumeration Survey section. Participants were asked to provide their name and contact information for the VI-SPDAT. Information collected from the VI-SPDAT section will be added to the Dufferin County By-Name List, which will inform referrals to housing supports and services within the Region.

Care was taken by volunteers to ensure that respondents felt comfortable, regardless of where the survey took place. During the interviews, volunteers reminded participants that they could skip any questions or withdraw from the survey at any time. All participants were provided with a gift bag upon completion of the survey. Gift bags included toiletries supplied by FTP, as well as a \$25 grocery store gift card.

Of the 32 individuals encountered during the count, 23 were screened in, met the definition of experiencing homelessness, consented and fully completed the survey. The results in this report reflect the data collected from these 23 individuals.

CHALLENGES & LIMITATIONS

There are a number of challenges in any homeless count. Although a PiT Count is the most comprehensive methodology for the collection of data on people experiencing homelessness, its limitations must be considered. The most important limitation is that a PiT Count inherently undercounts the homeless population in a community⁸. A count is not intended to be a measure of everyone who experiences homelessness in a community over time.

CHALLENGES & LIMITATIONS (CONT.)

By focusing on a period of time, the count will not include people who may cycle in and out of homelessness, and will not provide information about the number of people who experience homelessness over the course of a week, month, or year. What it will do is provide an estimate of how many people are homeless on a given night(s). Counts are also unable to capture all persons experiencing hidden homelessness, who may be staying at a friend's house, couch surfing, or living in a motel room. Additionally, for a variety of reasons, some individuals experiencing homelessness generally do not want to be located, and make efforts to avoid detection.

In addition, consideration must be given to the fact that the sample of Dufferin County's homeless population was not randomly selected. Although significant efforts were made to reach out to homeless individuals throughout the County, there were still limitations in survey methods.

COVID-19 SPECIFIC CHALLENGES & LIMITATIONS

As the pandemic has disrupted nearly every aspect of life, it also disrupted the count. There were additional limitations and challenges to the 2021 PiT Count presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. It is important to note that the changes to methodologies for the 2021 PiT Count may not allow for direct apples to apples comparisons to the 2016 and 2018 counts and potentially counts of future years. While this is not ideal, valuable and useful data was still collected. The following is a brief summary of some of the pandemic-specific added challenges:

- The count was not used as a public engagement tool this year. Less volunteers were used as a large number of volunteers participating in the count contradicted prevailing Public Health guidance of staying at home and physically distancing from others as much as possible
- Needed to source PPE for all volunteers/staff and Public Health safety measures and guidelines needed to be strictly adhered to (physical distancing, COVID-19 screening, etc.)
- Gatherings could not be encouraged, where mass surveys could have potentially been conducted
- Those experiencing homelessness in public areas, who are well-hidden, or who are actively avoiding being seen, may have been missed this year. With the stay-at-home order, many public spaces, such as parks, were shut down
- There may have also been a barrier for homeless individuals to reach out to the PiT Count as they could not access public venues to use phones or computers as a means of communication
- Due to less contact during the weeks preceding the survey, individuals experiencing homelessness may not have been aware of the count

Given these challenges, those who are unsheltered may have been particularly hard to locate, and their numbers may not have been reflected in this report. With these limitations in mind, the findings from the Dufferin County 2021 PiT Count Report should be considered the minimum number of people that were experiencing homelessness in Dufferin County on April 21 & April 22, 2021.

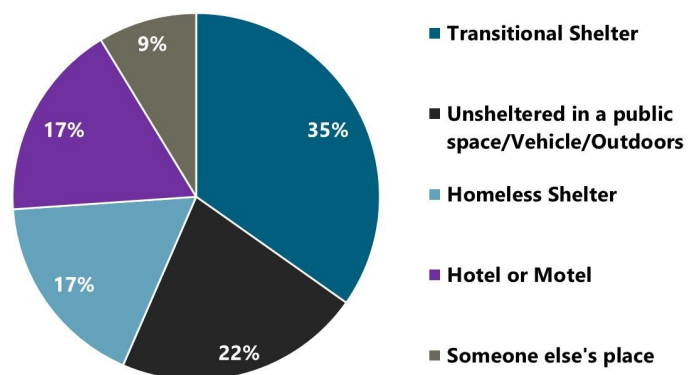
SURVEY RESPONSE

The PiT Count survey has been designed to allow for the ability to “screen out” all participants who are not considered to be homeless at the time of the count. Respondents were screened out if they reported that they had already answered a survey, if they currently had a place to stay, or if they were unwilling to participate in the survey. Of the 32 individuals encountered during the two-day count, 23 were screened in, met the definition of experiencing homelessness, consented and fully completed the survey. The following section provides information about 23 individuals who were identified as homeless during the two-day count period, it should not be used to generalize homelessness in Dufferin County.

2021 RESULTS

A total of 23 individuals were found to be homeless in Dufferin County on April 21 and April 22, 2021. Of the 23 survey participants, eight respondents (35%) reported that they were staying at a transitional shelter. Five respondents (22%) reported being completely unsheltered, meaning they were staying in parks, on the streets, in vehicles, or in other public spaces. Homeless shelter and hotel/motel stays both had four respondents each (17% for each), while only two individuals (9%) reported that they were staying at someone else’s place.

**Where are you staying tonight? /
Where did you stay last night?**



There were three family households experiencing homelessness during the count. These households included at least one parent or guardian and one, or more, dependent children under the age of 18. There were five dependent children reported to be homeless during the survey, details of these dependents were not included. Two of the three family households were staying at a transitional shelter and the other was staying at a homeless shelter during the time frame of the count.

	2021 (n=23)	2018 (n=44)	2016 (n=78)
Unsheltered (Public Space)	22%	9%	9%
Homeless Shelter (or other emergency shelter)	17%	43%	43%
Transitional Shelter, Motel or Hotel or Staying at someone else's place	61%	48%	48%

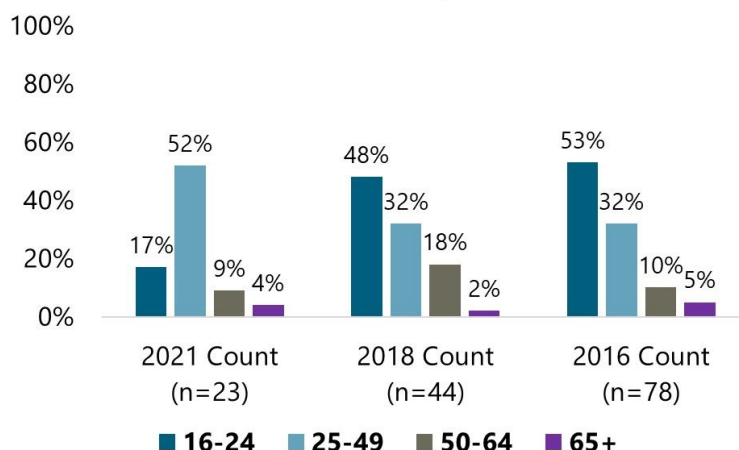
In the 2021 PiT Count, percentages of those unsheltered/sheltered at a homeless or other emergency shelter/and those at a transitional shelter, motel or hotel or staying at someone else's place differ greatly from the data collected in both 2016 and 2018. However, caution should be used when comparing the 2021 count to the 2018 and 2016 counts due to the limitations and challenges presented by COVID-19 including the smaller sample size.

2021 RESULTS - DEMOGRAPHICS

Age

The average age of those experiencing homelessness during the 2021 PiT Count was 35.3 years old. The most common age range was 25-49, with 12 respondents (52%) falling into this category. Four respondents (17%) were 16-24 years old, two respondents (9%) were aged 50-64, one respondent was over the age of 65 (4%) and four respondents declined to answer (17%).

How old are you?



These findings differ from the findings of previous count years. In both 2018 and 2016, youths aged 16-24 comprised the largest group among the homeless in Dufferin County.

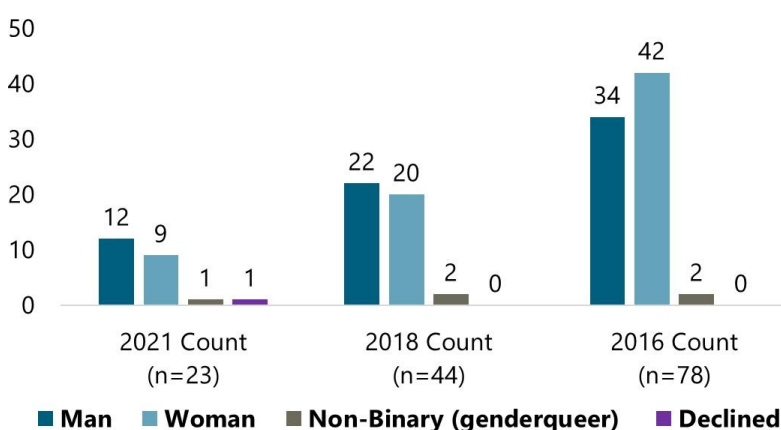
According to the Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health Social Determinants of Health Interactive Reports⁵, the most common age range for the population in Dufferin County is 45-64 years old. Twenty-nine percent of individuals fall into this category, while only 13% of residents in the area are youths between the ages of 15-24. Therefore, it was found in the 2021 count that youths are still slightly over-represented, but not as much as seen in previous counts.

During the 2018 PiT Count, it was found that more than half (64%) of survey respondents reported that they had first experienced homelessness as a child under the age of 18, with the most common age being 16 years. The 2021 PiT Count saw different results. During the 2021 count, 48% of those surveyed responded that they first experienced homelessness between the ages of 25-49, while only 30% responded that they first experienced homelessness while under the age of 18.

Gender

On the two days of the 2021 count, twelve respondents (52%) identified as men, nine respondents (39%) as women, one individual identified as non-binary (4%) and one individual declined to answer (4%). Since the 2016 count, the proportion of women to men has dropped, with those who identify as men now making up a larger percentage of those experiencing homelessness in Dufferin.

What gender do you identify with?

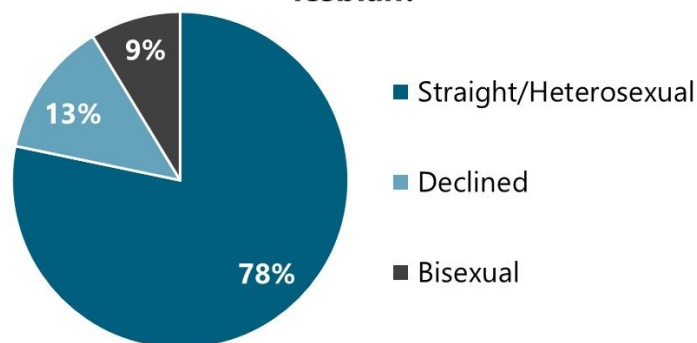


2021 RESULTS - DEMOGRAPHICS

Sexual Orientation

During the time period of the 2021 count, eighteen respondents (78%) described their sexual orientation as straight/heterosexual. Three respondents (13%) declined or did not answer the question and two respondents (9%) described their sexual orientation as bisexual, which is the same number of respondents who described themselves as bisexual in 2018. The percentage of respondents who identify as LGBTQ2S+ in the 2021 count was 9%, a slightly lower percentage than in the 2018 count (11%).

How do you describe your sexual orientation, for example straight, gay, lesbian?



Indigenous Status

During the data collection process, individuals were asked “Do you identify as Indigenous or do you have Indigenous ancestry?” None of the respondents reported that they were First Nations, Inuit, Metis, or had Indigenous ancestry. This is a large difference from the findings reported in the 2018 PiT Count, where 18% of those individuals experiencing homelessness at the time of the count self-reported that they were First Nations, Inuit, Metis, or had Indigenous ancestry.

Veterans

During this year's count, no respondents indicated that they had previous service in the Canadian Military or RCMP. This differs from the 2018 PiT results where two respondents indicated that they were veterans or had previous RCMP service.

Newcomers to Canada & Newcomers to Dufferin County

None of the survey respondents reported that they came to Canada as an immigrant, refugee or refugee claimant. This differs from the three respondents in 2018 that responded that they were newcomers to Canada.

When asked the question “How long have you been in Dufferin County?” Only three respondents (13%) reported living in the community their whole life. Three respondents (13%) reported that they had been in the community for less than one year, while fourteen respondents (61%) reported that they have been in Dufferin County for at least one year. Three respondents declined to answer this question. These results differ from the 2018 PiT Count results which saw 7% of respondents reporting that they had lived in the community their whole life, 46% reporting that they had been here for less than one year and 48% reporting that they had been in the community for at least one year.

BARRIERS TO HOUSING

People who are experiencing homelessness face multiple barriers to obtaining and maintaining affordable, permanent housing.

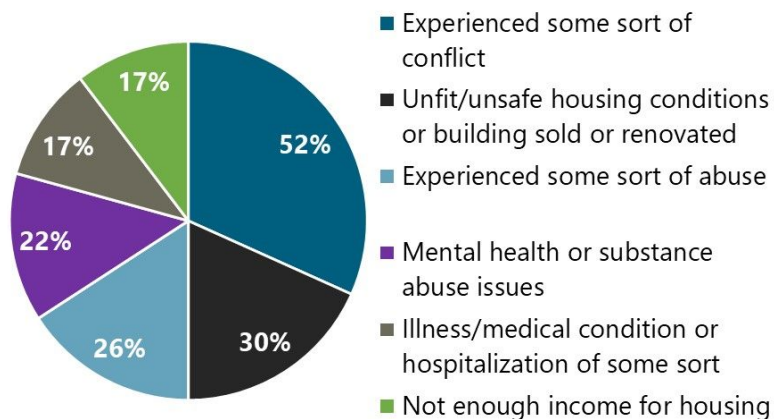
Survey respondents in the 2021 count were asked what caused them to lose their housing most recently. They were able to select all the causes and many respondents selected multiple causes. By grouping the causes into broader categories, the top three reported reasons can be better recognized. Experiencing some sort of conflict was reported most frequently by survey respondents (52% of respondents listed it as a reason). Unfit/unsafe housing conditions or building sold or renovated was chosen by 30% of respondents, and 26% of respondents reported that it was because they experienced some sort of abuse (by parent/guardian, spouse/partner or other).

A further breakdown shows that the unfit/unsafe housing conditions was listed by six respondents (26%) and not enough income for housing and conflict with spouse/partner were each selected by four respondents (17% each).

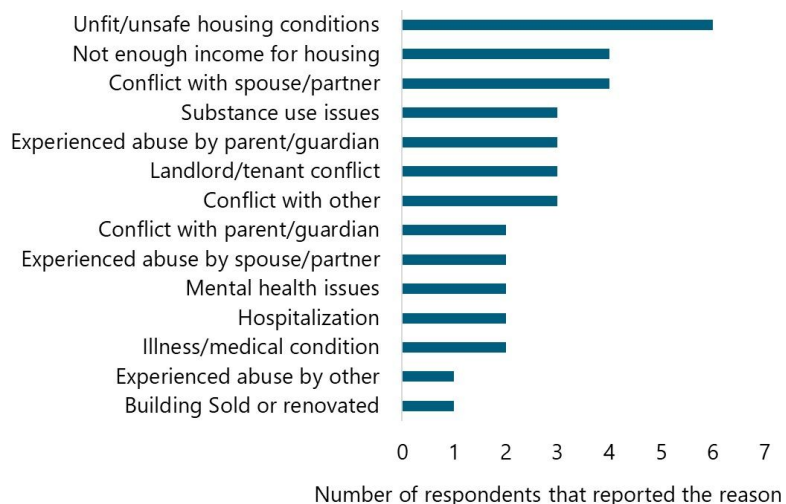
These results are difficult to compare to the previous counts as the wording of some of the barriers has changed. However, in the 2018 PiT Count unsafe housing was selected by four respondents, whereas in the 2021 PiT Count it was listed by six respondents and conflict with spouse was chosen by one respondent, whereas it was chosen by four in the 2021 PiT Count. Abuse by spouse was listed by five respondents in the 2018 PiT Count versus two respondents in the 2021 PiT Count, and abuse by parent was selected by six respondents in the 2018 count, versus three in the 2021 count. Caution should be noted when comparing these results from the two count years as the sample size of the 2021 PiT Count is nearly half that of the 2018 count.

During the 2021 PiT Count, only one respondent reported that their most recent housing loss was related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

What happened that caused you to lose your housing most recently?



What happened that caused you to lose your housing most recently?



DURATION OF HOMELESSNESS

Chronic homelessness refers to individuals who are currently experiencing homelessness AND who meet at least one 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)

During the 2021 PiT Count it was found that seven respondents (30%) have been homeless for six months or longer. Seven respondents (30%) also responded that they have had recurrent experiences of homelessness over the past three years. Four respondents (17%) reported not having had permanent housing in the past approximate 12 months.

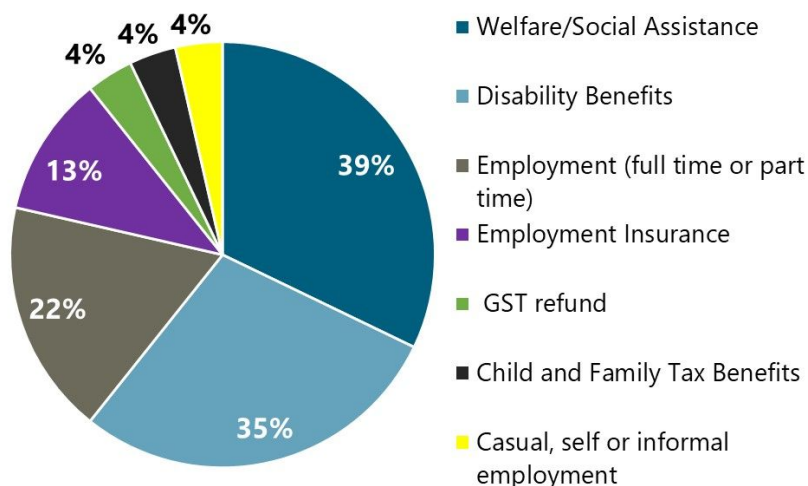
SOURCES OF INCOME

As reported during the 2021 PiT Count, the most common method through which individuals experiencing homelessness obtain money is through Ontario Works or Social Assistance Programs. Nine respondents (39%) reported that they rely on these programs for income. This is very similar to the results from the 2018 count (41%).

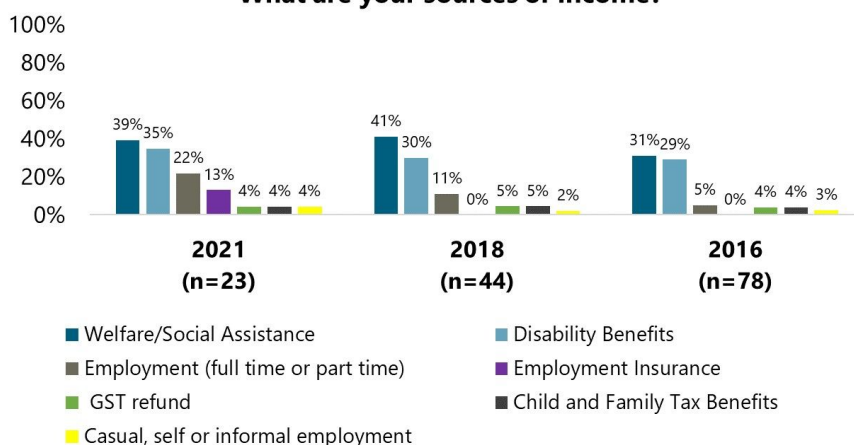
An additional eight respondents (35%) receive support from Disability Benefits. This is slightly up from the 2018 (30%) and 2016 (29%) counts.

A large difference seen between the 2021 PiT Count and the 2018 and 2016 counts is that in 2021, five individuals (22%) reported that they are employed either full or part time, this number was lower in 2018 (11%) and much lower in 2016 (5%). Another difference was that in 2021, three respondents (13%) listed Employment Insurance as a source of income whereas no respondents reported it in 2018 or 2016.

What are your sources of income?



What are your sources of income?



SERVICE USAGE

Foster Care

A total of five survey respondents (22%) reported having lived in foster care and/or a group home setting. In comparison, in the 2018 PiT Count, sixteen survey respondents (36%) reported having lived in foster care and/or a group home setting.

Homeless/Emergency Shelters

It was found that eleven individuals (48%) who were surveyed reported that they had stayed in a homeless/emergency shelter at least once in the past year. This number is lower than in previous counts. In 2018, 86% of those surveyed reported that they had stayed in an emergency shelter at least once in the past year, and in 2016, 74% of those surveyed reported that they had. During the 2021 PiT Count, five out of the nine (55%) female respondents surveyed reported that they had stayed in a homeless or emergency shelter in the past year.

OTHER QUESTIONS

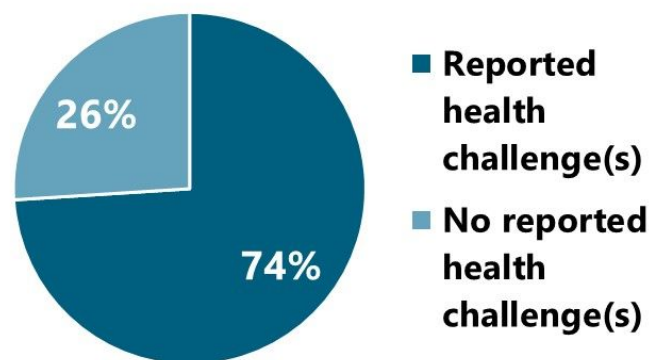
Health Challenges

Respondents were asked if they have any health challenges at this time including chronic/acute medical conditions or illnesses, physical limitations, addictions, learning or cognitive limitations or mental health issues.

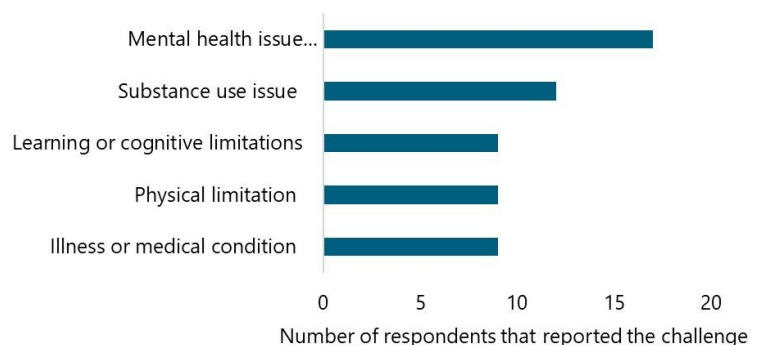
Seventeen respondents (74%) reported that they had at least one type of health challenge at the time of the survey. This is a bit lower than in 2018 when 82% of respondents reported that they had a least one type of health challenge. Seventeen respondents (74%) reported that they had mental health issues, similar to 2018 (70%). Twelve (52%) reported having a substance use issue, which is also similar to 2018 (55%). Nine respondents each (39% respectively) reported having an illness or medical condition, a physical limitation, or learning or cognitive limitations.

Fifteen respondents (65%) reported having more than one health challenge and seven respondents (30%) reported having either four or all five of the health challenges.

Do you identify as having any of the following health challenges at this time?



Do you identify as having any of the following health challenges at this time?



The Dufferin County 2021 Point-in-Time Count met both Federal and Provincial requirements to conduct a local enumeration of people experiencing homelessness as part of a Coordinated Count in 2021. The PiT Count was designed to capture a snapshot of people in the community who were experiencing homelessness during April 21 & 22, 2021. Dufferin County identified 23 individuals as being homeless, and an additional five dependents under the age of 18, whose information was not recorded. Furthermore, there were nine individuals who were screened out and may be considered being at risk for homelessness.

Useful data was gathered during the count, from which the following points can be made:

- During the time frame of the count, 35% of respondents reported that they were staying at a transitional shelter and 22% of respondents reported being completely unsheltered, meaning they were staying in parks, on the streets, in vehicles, or in other public spaces
- At the time of the count, about half (52%) of those experiencing homelessness in Dufferin County were between the ages of 25-49
- Almost half (48%) of those surveyed responded that they first experienced homelessness between the ages of 25-49
- Around half (52%) of respondents identified as men, 39% as women
- Nearly half (48%) of respondents experiencing homelessness in Dufferin County have used an Emergency Shelter at some point over the past year
- As many respondents (26%) listed unfit/unsafe housing conditions as a barrier to housing and 17% of respondents listed not enough income for housing as a barrier to housing, there is a need to look into housing safety, fit and affordability within Dufferin County
- There is still a need to look at changing/improving services related to abuse and conflict in the home as both were leading causes as to why those surveyed had lost their housing most recently. This was also reported in the 2018 PiT Count
- Many survey respondents reported that they rely on either Ontario Works/Social Assistance Programs (39%) or Disability Benefits (35%) as sources of income
- Most respondents (74%) reported that they had at least one type of health challenge at the time of the survey. Over a quarter of the respondents (30%) reported having either four or all five of the health challenges listed in the survey
- The majority of individuals surveyed are in need of services related to addiction and/or mental health

The number of homeless individuals counted in 2021 was lower than those reported during the 2018 Count. There may be several reasons for this decrease. One of the reasons is that less individuals may have been experiencing homelessness in Dufferin. In 2020, Dufferin reduced chronic homelessness by more than 50% and sustained it for at least three consecutive months. In October 2020, Dufferin was recognized as having achieved an Advanced Quality By-Name List (BNL). In February 2021, Dufferin was recognized as having an Advanced Quality Coordinated Access System - the first in Canada. These wins have been the result of changes Dufferin County has made in its approach to housing and homelessness since the 2018 PiT Count.

The Dufferin County Housing Services Department continues to offer the Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP). It has also implemented the Chronic Homeless Housing Allowance Program (CHHAP). CHHAP provides chronically homeless individuals a portable housing allowance of up to \$821 per month. By end of year 2020, six chronically homeless individuals from the BNL were receiving this housing allowance.

Dufferin also now has two subprojects under Reaching Home:

- DAFHT has hired two Housing Support Workers who work with clients on the BNL identifying as chronic. Workers assist clients with searching for, and securing, housing and completing applications and referrals to mental health and/or medical resources. They also provide ongoing support and home visits
- A Landlord Liaison was hired. The Landlord Liaison is responsible for the ongoing development and maintenance of relationships with landlords in Dufferin. The Landlord Liaison and Housing Support Workers work collaboratively

Dufferin also began the Coordinated Access Transitional Housing (CATH) program, which provides those who are identified as chronic on the BNL with a transitional unit for up to three months. These units are located at various motels in the area. CATH is currently funded until March 2022. Supports for these clients and the landlords are being provided by the Housing Support Worker and the Landlord Liaison. This program began in December of 2020 with four units through the Lighthouse and ten units in local motels. Clients are provided with support to look for permanent housing while working on life stabilization.

Dufferin County also continues to have strong community collaborations, as well as ongoing leadership and support from the CAB. Therefore, the decrease in the 2021 PiT Count survey sample from the 2018 numbers may be partly explained because there were less individuals experiencing homelessness in Dufferin County at that time.

The number of individuals experiencing homelessness reported in the 2021 PiT Count (23) closely reflects the number of homeless individuals reported on the March 2021 BNL (26), from just a few weeks before the count was completed. It was found that the vast majority of the individuals encountered during the count were already on the BNL.

However, it must also be noted that although every effort was made to reach out to those who were experiencing homelessness, 2021 with the COVID-19 pandemic, was unlike any other count year. There were much greater challenges in surveying those who may be experiencing homelessness, including a province-wide stay-at-home order, and there is a chance that some individuals may have been missed.

This report has highlighted data made available from the 23 surveys conducted in April of 2021. Of significant note is the connection between housing insecurity and mental health challenges, and/or substance use challenges.

Next Steps

- The results of this count will be used to inform objectives, targets, and outcomes as well as future Housing and Homelessness Plan updates for the County of Dufferin
- Results of the count will help the County, community partners and organizations to better understand the needs and barriers of individuals and families experiencing homelessness
- The Dufferin County BNL will be updated with those that responded that they would like to be connected to supports and services and consented to be added to the BNL. The BNL contributes to a quality Coordinated Access System for those experiencing homelessness
- Dufferin County will continue to work with people with lived experience of homelessness, community partners and government (federal, provincial and municipal) to set priorities for action as we work toward long-term solutions to homelessness
- Dufferin County will continue to conduct homeless counts if required, and will use the lessons learned from the 2021 PiT Count to improve the methodology for any future counts. It is possible that successive counts will be less likely in future, as the BNL and HIFIS 4 support the analysis of data and trends in the region, and provide ongoing current data on those experiencing homelessness in the community
- The Dufferin County 2021 Point-in-Time Count Results Report will be shared with other organizations, Committee/Council, other levels of government, and the public

Moving Forward

Dufferin County has an ongoing commitment to end chronic homelessness in the community. Accurate data is essential to being able to invest in and deliver the most meaningful coordinated services to prevent, reduce and end homelessness. The 2021 PiT Count was also another opportunity for community partners, organizations and volunteers/staff to work together and engage with people experiencing homelessness.

Although people experiencing homelessness in Dufferin County make up a small percentage of the overall population, it is clear from this survey data and other local research completed, including the Community Safety and Well-being Plan survey conducted in 2020, that individuals and families are struggling to find local affordable and suitable housing options. Dufferin County will continue to address housing equity with effort, dedication and with the help of community partners and collaborations. We gratefully acknowledge the efforts of all individuals, committees, local agencies and service providers involved in this year's count. We appreciate and want to thank all of you.

ENDNOTES

¹ Government of Canada. *Everyone Counts - A guide to Point-in-Time Counts in Canada – edition 3.1 - Standards for participation*. Available at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/homelessness/reports/guide-point-in-time-counts.html>

² Government of Canada. *Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy Directives*. Available at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/homelessness/directives.html>

³ The Canadian Observatory on Homelessness. Homeless Hub - Hidden Homelessness. Available at: <https://www.homelesshub.ca/about-homelessness/population-specific/hidden-homelessness>

⁴ Statistics Canada. (2017). 2016 Census. Statistics Canada. Released November 29, 2017

⁵ Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health. (2018). *Social determinants of Health Status Report*. Available at: <https://bi.wdgppublichealth.ca/reports/>

⁶ 20,000 Homes Dufferin. (2016). *20,000 Homes Dufferin County Results Report*.

⁷ 20,000 Homes Dufferin (2018). *Results Report, Dufferin County 2018 Point-in-Time Count*.

⁸ National Law Center on Homeless (2017). *Don't Count on it: How the HUD Point-in-Time Count Underestimates the Homelessness Crisis in America*. Available at: <https://www.nlchp.org/documents/HUD-PIT-report2017>

ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

- BNL: By-Name List
- CA: Coordinated Access
- CAB: Community Advisory Board
- CAT: Coordinated Access Table
- CHHAP: Chronic Homeless Housing Allowance Program
- CMHA: Canadian Mental Health Association
- DAFHT: Dufferin Area Family Health Team
- FTP: Family Transition Place
- HIFIS: Homeless Individuals and Families Information System
- HPP: Homelessness Prevention Program
- LGBTQ2S+: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning, Two-Spirit
- PiT Count: Point-in-Time Count
- PPE: Personal Protective Equipment
- SHIP: Services and Housing In the Province
- VI-SPDAT: The Vulnerability Index – Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool