Above: A collage of photos from the Pillars Single Room Occupancy Program.
This permanent supportive housing project for single adults opened in 2019 and is located in Appleton, Wisconsin.

2019
Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Report
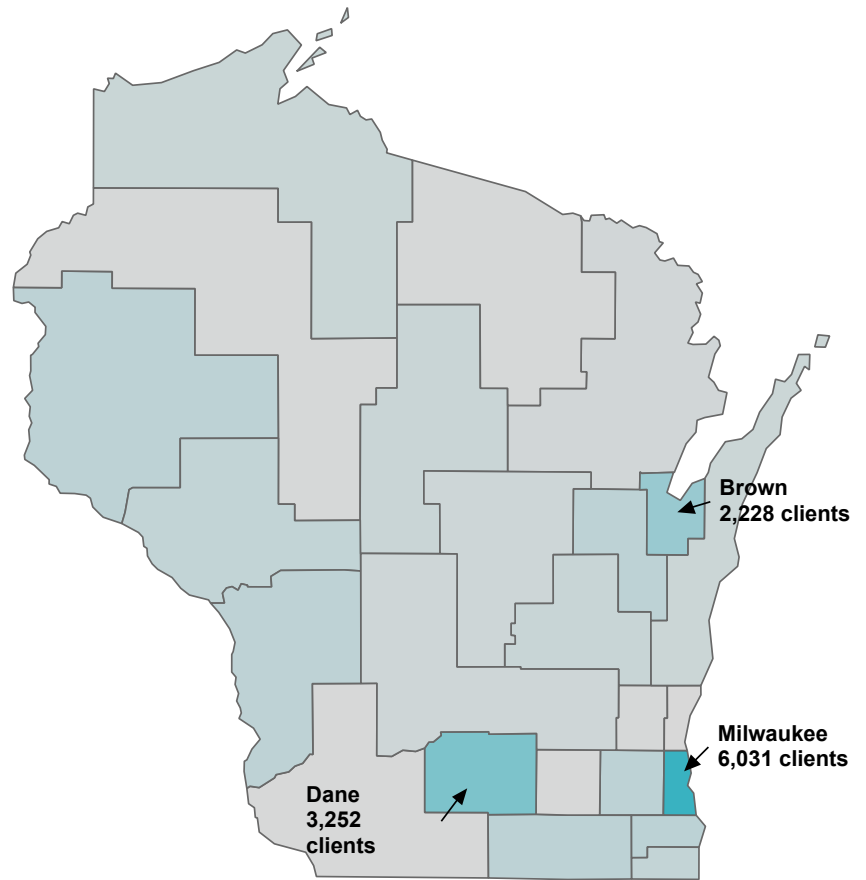
v2
Updated 9/25/2020

Institute for Community Alliances

The State of Homelessness in Wisconsin

Total Clients Experiencing Homelessness in 2019: **21,632**

21,632 clients experiencing homelessness received services and shelter from HMIS agencies in Wisconsin in 2019. This includes clients who were served in the following project types:

* Emergency Shelter
* Transitional Housing
* PATH, ESG, and City-funded
  Street Outreach
* Rapid Re-Housing
  (entering only)
* Permanent Supportive
  Housing (entering only)

The greatest number of persons experiencing homelessness in Wisconsin are in and around population centers. Nationally, the distribution of persons experiencing homelessness is overwhelmingly urban. Many people in rural areas facing extreme poverty will live "doubled up" with family or friends, or they may live in substandard housing. In other cases, they may leave rural areas for the promise of increased employment opportunities and social services in larger communities.

**Brown
2,228 clients**

**Milwaukee
6,031 clients**

**Dane
3,252
clients**

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Total Clients
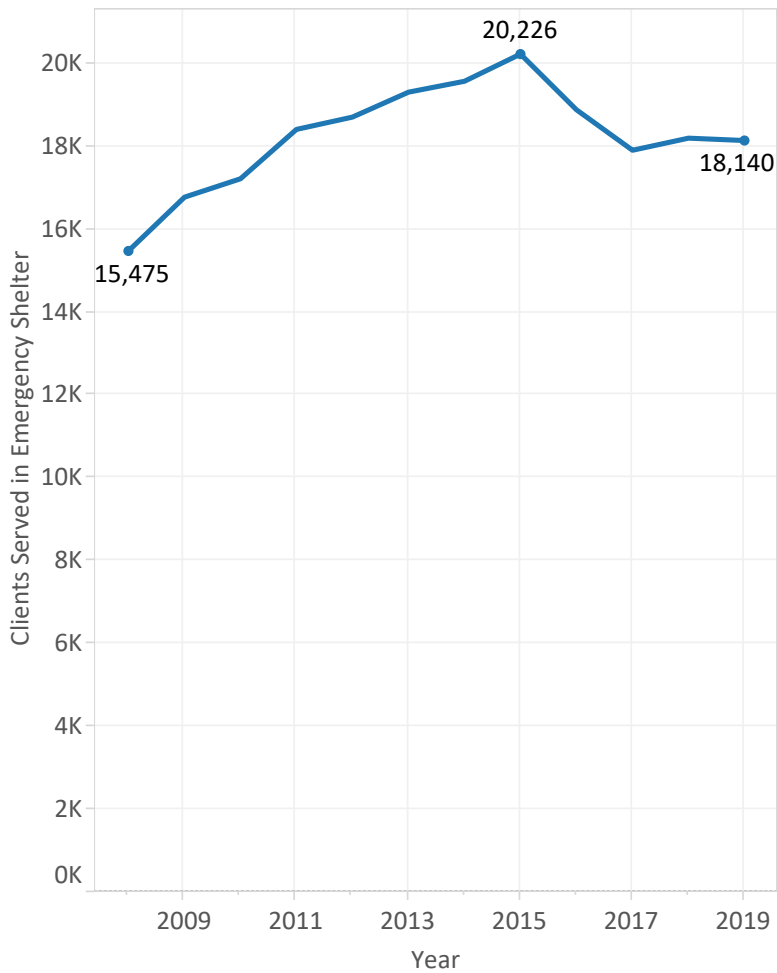
54   6,031

Clients in Emergency Shelter over Time

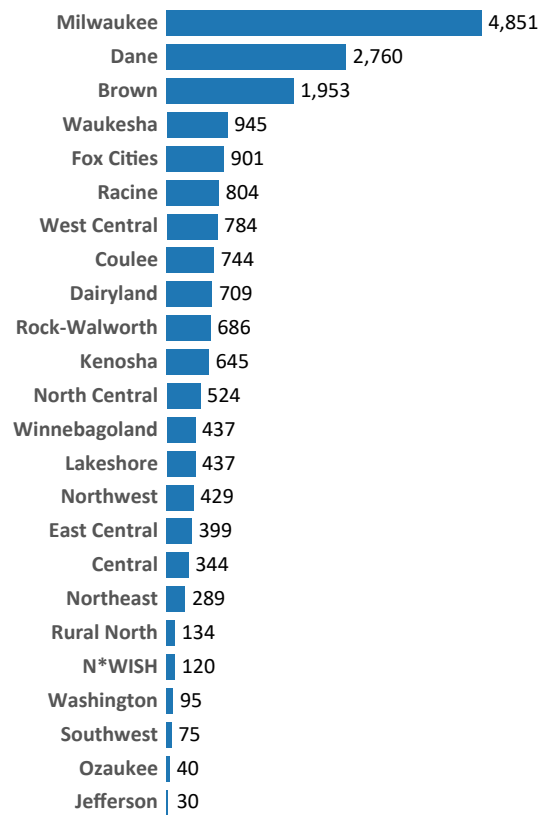**18,140** clients had an emergency shelter stay with HMIS agencies in Wisconsin in 2019.

10,272 of those clients (57%) sought emergency shelter in the Balance of State.

Since the most recent peak in 2015, the number of clients using HMIS-reporting emergency shelter beds has decreased about 10%. The number of clients who sought emergency shelter is about the same as in 2018.
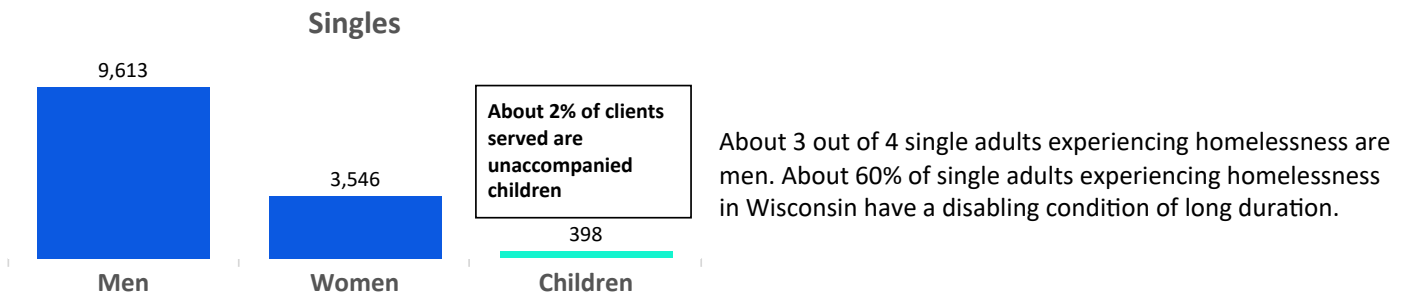
Total Clients Served in Emergency Shelter

2019 Distribution of Emergency Shelter Clients

Region	Clients
Milwaukee	4,851
Dane	2,760
Brown	1,953
Waukesha	945
Fox Cities	901
Racine	804
West Central	784
Coulee	744
Dairyland	709
Rock-Walworth	686
Kenosha	645
North Central	524
Winnebagoland	437
Lakeshore	437
Northwest	429
East Central	399
Central	344
Northeast	289
Rural North	134
N*WISH	120
Washington	95
Southwest	75
Ozaukee	40
Jefferson	30

Household Types

Singles

61% of clients served by HMIS projects in 2019 were single adults.

Singles

9,613

Men

3,546

Women

| About 2% of clients served are unaccompanied children |

398

Children

About 3 out of 4 single adults experiencing homelessness are men. About 60% of single adults experiencing homelessness in Wisconsin have a disabling condition of long duration.
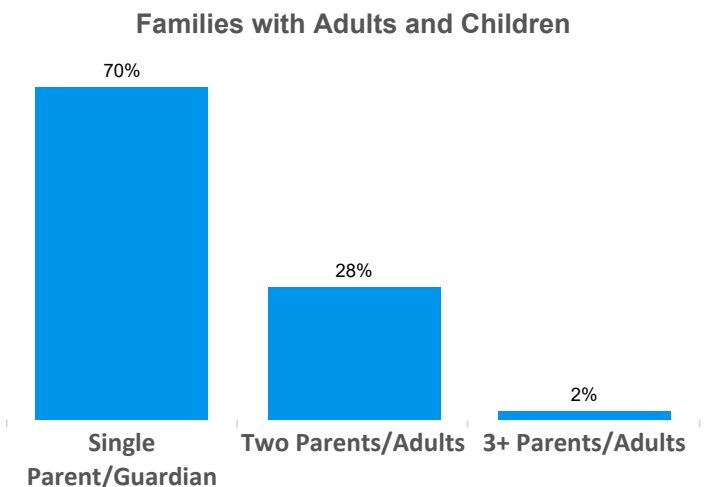
Homeless Families with Children

37% of persons experiencing homelessness in Wisconsin who sought services did so as members of a family (with adults and children).

The majority of families (70%) are households with one adult and at least one child. On average, families with children have about 2 children.
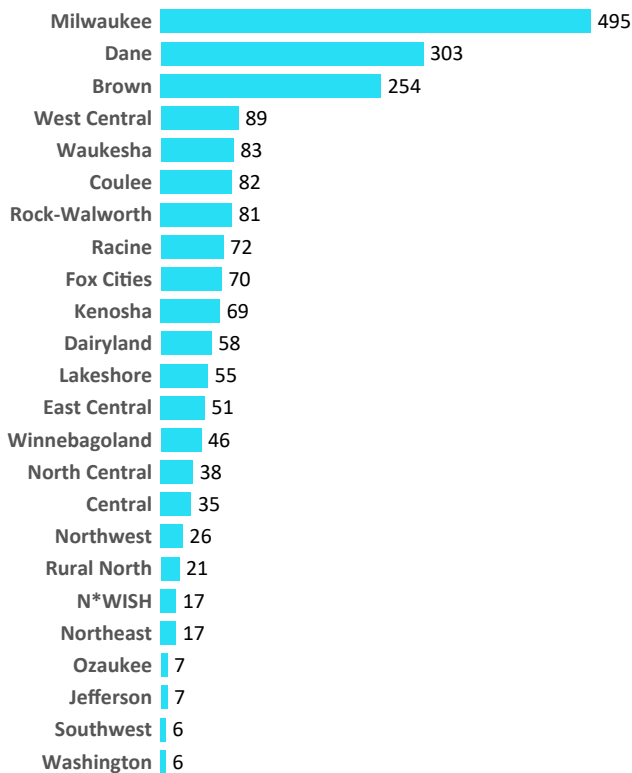
14% of families have 4 or more children. Affordable housing is difficult to find for all low-income families, and it is even harder for large families.

Families with Adults and Children

70%

Single Parent/Guardian

28%

Two Parents/Adults

2%

3+ Parents/Adults

Singles include only clients who were not served as members of a family in 2019. Because family structure can change over time, clients may be included in more than one family during 2019.

Youth and Unaccompanied Children

Youth ages 18-24 represent about 9% of persons served by HMIS homeless service providers in Wisconsin in 2019. About 65% of youth are served as singles, not as members of a family.

Region	Count
Milwaukee	495
Dane	303
Brown	254
West Central	89
Waukesha	83
Coulee	82
Rock-Walworth	81
Racine	72
Fox Cities	70
Kenosha	69
Dairyland	58
Lakeshore	55
East Central	51
Winnebagoland	46
North Central	38
Central	35
Northwest	26
Rural North	21
N*WISH	17
Northeast	17
Ozaukee	7
Jefferson	7
Southwest	6
Washington	6

National studies estimate that 20%-45% of youth experiencing homelessness identify as LGBTQ, and LGBTQ youth are at least twice as likely to experience homelessness as non-LGBTQ youth.

LGBTQ individuals may face discrimination and rejection from family members, which can play a role in becoming homeless and struggling to regain housing. Many shelters in Wisconsin and throughout the United States are sex segregated, and LGBT+ individuals often have difficulty finding shelters that are safe and welcoming. **Proposed changes to HUD's Equal Access Rule may exacerbate this issue, especially for transgender folks.**

The rule will still require that HUD-funded housing and shelter programs do not discriminate based on actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status. However, the proposed modification will no longer require sex-segregated facilities to provide services consistent with folks' gender identities.

An estimated 0.6% of the total US adult population is transgender, and 1.2% of youth experiencing homelessness in Wisconsin identify as transgender.

398 unaccompanied children received homeless services in 2019.

These are children under the age of 18 who received homeless services without a parent or guardian. 7% of children experiencing homelessness in Wisconsin were unaccompanied in 2019. 1 out of 3 teens experiencing homelessness is unaccompanied. Though almost all unaccompanied children are teens, 26 children ages 11 or 12 received homeless services alone.
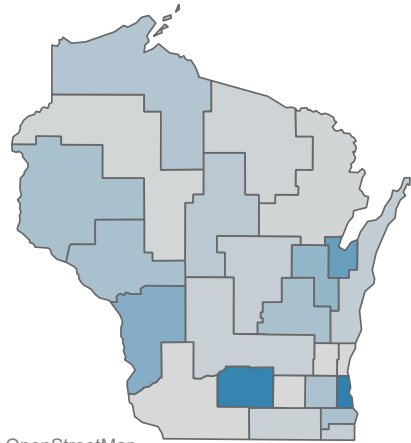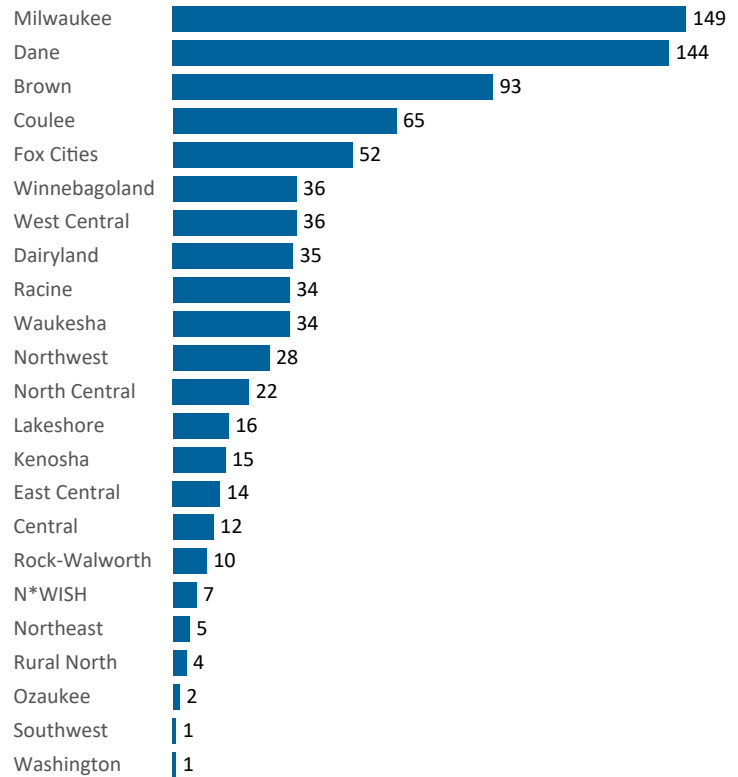
Veterans Experiencing Homelessness

Veterans Served in Emergency Shelter, 2019

© 2020 Mapbox © OpenStreetMap

6% of adults who sought emergency shelter in Wisconsin in 2019 are veterans, and **10% of adults experiencing homelessness** in Wisconsin are veterans.

There are many projects in Wisconsin dedicated specifically to preventing and ending homelessness for veterans. The Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Program funds prevention and rapid re-housing for veterans and their families. The Grant and Per Diem (GPD) Program funds transitional housing, and the Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) Program funds permanent supportive housing for veterans.
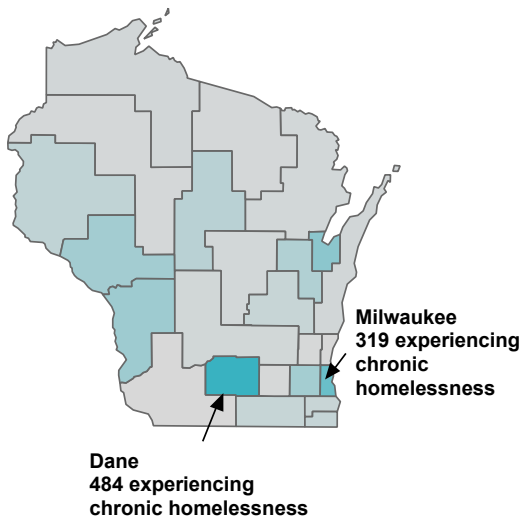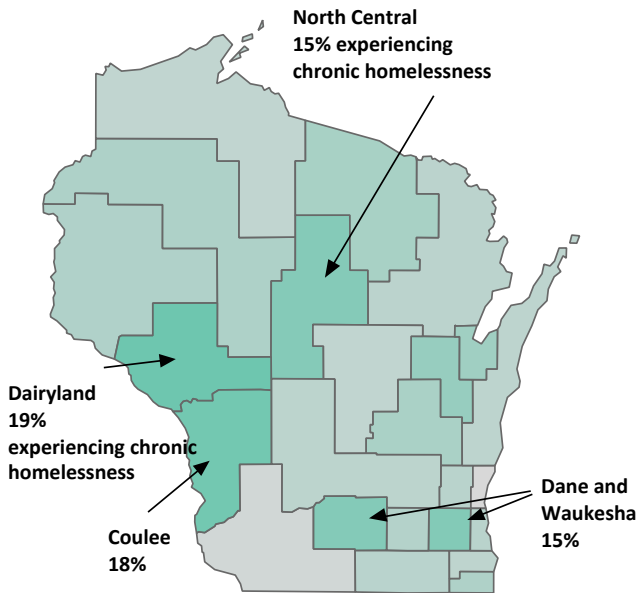
Region	Count
Milwaukee	149
Dane	144
Brown	93
Coulee	65
Fox Cities	52
Winnebagoland	36
West Central	36
Dairyland	35
Racine	34
Waukesha	34
Northwest	28
North Central	22
Lakeshore	16
Kenosha	15
East Central	14
Central	12
Rock-Walworth	10
N*WISH	7
Northeast	5
Rural North	4
Ozaukee	2
Southwest	1
Washington	1

Chronically Homeless Clients

Milwaukee
319 experiencing chronic homelessness

Dane
484 experiencing chronic homelessness
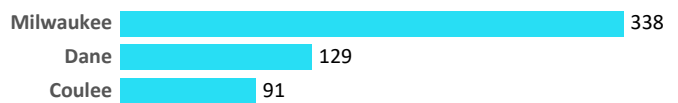
© Mapbox © OSM

Chronic Homelessness in 2019

The number of clients experiencing chronic homelessness in Wisconsin in 2019 increased by 7% since 2018 (133 clients). The number of clients experiencing chronic homelessness in Dane County increased by 13% (57 clients) from 2018 to 2019.

In two communities – Milwaukee County and the Coulee Region – the number of clients *decreased* by at least 10 percent.

These two regions (plus Dane County) had the most clients entering Permanent Supportive Housing units in 2018 AND in 2019. In 2019, 804 clients entered PSH.

Clients Entering PSH in 2019

Milwaukee	338
Dane	129
Coulee	91

[the remaining 31% of PSH entries were in other CoCs]

Statewide

9% of clients served by HMIS providers in 2019 were chronically homeless.

About 40% of all folks experiencing chronic homelessness are served in Milwaukee and Dane Counties.

Coulee CoC and Dairyland CoCs have the highest percent of clients served who are experiencing chronic homelessness (18-19%) followed by Waukesha, Dane, and North Central CoCs (15%)

North Central
15% experiencing chronic homelessness

Dairyland
19% experiencing chronic homelessness

Coulee
18%

Dane and Waukesha
15%

© Mapbox © OSM

Clients with a disability who have been homeless continuously for 12 months or longer, or four times in three years for a total of 12 months, may be considered chronically homeless.
[See full HUD definition for more information]
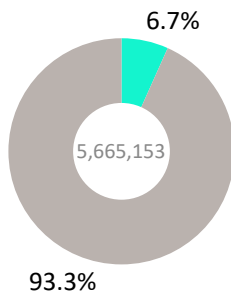
Racial Disparities

1 out of 46 Black or African American Wisconsinites experienced homelessness in 2019

1 out of 509 White, non-Hispanic or Latino/a Wisconsinites experienced homelessness in 2019
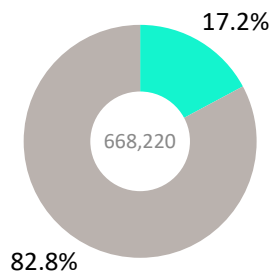
"This is no accident; it is the result of centuries of structural racism that have excluded historically oppressed people—particularly Black and Native Americans—from equal access to housing, community supports, and opportunities for economic mobility."
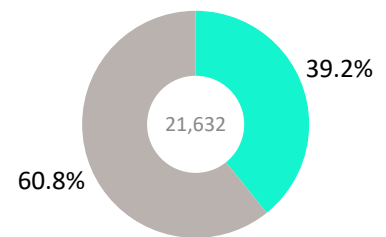*SPARC Phase One Findings, Center for Social Innovation*

Wisconsin Population	Wisconsin Poverty Population	Wisconsin Homeless Population
6.7%	17.2%	39.2%
5,665,153	668,220	21,632
93.3%	82.8%	60.8%

Black or African American Wisconsinsites are **10.6** times as likely to experience homelessness

Selected Race
Black or African American

Black Wisconsin residents are almost 11 times as likely to experience homelessness compared to white, non-Latino Wisconsinites. Wisconsin residents who are multi-racial or American Indian are about 6 times as likely to experience homelessness, and Latino/a residents are 2.2 times as likely to experience homelessness. The racial disparity in Wisconsin homelessness cannot be explained by poverty rates alone.

Throughout the United States, people of color are much more likely to experience homelessness than White people. The Center for Social Innovation has launched SPARC, an initiative to research racial disparities in homelessness and work toward solutions.

About ICA and the Wisconsin Annual Report

The State of Homelessness in Wisconsin was compiled by the Institute for Community Alliances (ICA) through the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) reporting tool. Wisconsin HMIS collects real-time data on nearly 80% of homeless dedicated beds in the state. The data do not include information from domestic violence shelters, from persons living with friends or family, or from unsheltered persons who had no interactions with homeless service providers using HMIS.

ICA is a non-profit organization based in Des Moines, Iowa that provides HMIS training and support for homeless service agencies around the country. Wisconsin HMIS staff are located in Madison, WI and across the state. The Institute for Community Alliances engages in research and produces reports on homelessness and related issues. In cooperation with state and federal agencies, private research firms, and university researchers, ICA works to inform regional and national efforts to end homelessness.

We welcome your questions, feedback, and input. Please direct correspondence to:

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An interactive version of this report is available at
icalliances.org/wisconsin-annual-report-dashboard

This version of the 2019 Annual Report corrects the counts for clients experiencing chronic homelessness. Version 1 incorrectly identified a statewide decrease in the total clients experiencing chronic homelessness.

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Racial Disparities

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