

# Point-in-Time Count 2025

## Frequently Asked Questions

Capital Regional District | September 2025

### Why do a Point-in-Time Count?

A Point-in-Time Count offers a snapshot of homelessness in our community on a specific night. Beyond the numbers, it helps us understand *who* is experiencing homelessness and *what* their circumstances look like. This knowledge is key to shaping effective responses.

A PiT Count strengthens a community's ability to act by:

- Painting a clearer picture of the local homeless population and their needs.
- Laying the groundwork for a comprehensive needs assessment.
- Guiding system planning and program design with real data.
- Raising public awareness and fostering informed conversations.
- Supplying valuable information to local, provincial, and national homelessness initiatives.

In short, a PiT Count isn't just data collection—it's a step toward informed action and meaningful change.

### How often is a PiT Count done?

The first Point-in-Time (PiT) Count and survey in Greater Victoria took place in 2016, in coordination with 30 other communities across Canada. Similar counts followed in 2018, 2020, and 2023, each time involving even more communities and following the same national methodology.

Starting in 2025, the Government of Canada has made PiT Counts an annual fixture. A comprehensive count and survey will occur every three years, with smaller-scale enumerations happening in-between to monitor homelessness trends more closely.

### What are the numbers for 2025?

The 2025 PiT Count identified people who were without a home and experiencing a variety of circumstances, including:

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| • Unsheltered and sleeping outdoors               | 318 |
| • Staying in an Emergency Shelter                 | 493 |
| • Living in Provisional Accommodations*           | 935 |
| • Unsure or unknown location of sleeping location | 3   |

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- TOTAL 1749

\* Respondent was in a transitional shelter or housing, a treatment facility or other facility including corrections, or provisionally accommodated at self-funded hotel/motel or someone else's place (i.e., "couch surfing")

### Is homelessness increasing and can the 2025 findings be compared to the 2023 findings?

The 2025 PiT Count cannot be directly compared to 2023 due to changes such as the in-survey timing, route coverage, and facility participation. While the total number of surveys decreased from 765 to 607, this reflects methodological adjustments and staffing limitations rather than a reduction in homelessness. Notably, the number of unsheltered individuals increased from 242 to 318, suggesting a rise in visible homelessness. Overall, the findings provide insight into trends over time but should be interpreted cautiously rather than as a definitive measure of increase.

### How do these findings fit with the research used to support the planning of new resources?

Effective responses to homelessness start with a clear understanding of the people they aim to support. The PiT Count adds valuable context by capturing not just how many individuals are affected, but also their circumstances, needs, and lived experiences. These insights, when combined with shelter usage data and other community datasets, create a fuller picture of local homelessness. This integrated approach ensures that new programs and services are grounded in evidence, aligned with real needs, and better positioned to make a meaningful impact.

### Does this represent all the people in the region who are experiencing either homelessness or housing stress in the region?

No. A Point-in-Time Count provides a snapshot of individuals who are both experiencing homelessness and willing to be identified on a specific night. While it offers valuable insights, it cannot capture the full scope of homelessness in the community. Some groups—such as people who are provisionally accommodated, not connected to homelessness services, or experiencing hidden homelessness—are less likely to be counted. This often includes youth, newcomers, and women, who

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may be staying temporarily with friends or family rather than in shelters or public spaces. Efforts like magnet events aim to better reach these populations, but certain groups will inevitably remain underrepresented in the data.

### How will the PiT Count findings be used?

This is important community level data that informs system and program planning for service providers and governments across the region. The CRD initiated the Regional Housing First Program partnership with BC Housing and Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, through which each partner has committed to investing \$40 million (\$120 million total) in the new affordable housing, with at least 20% of the programs units dedicated to people experiencing homelessness who are ready to live independently with ongoing support. Island Health is also a partner, committed to providing health resources, where needed.

The CRD's administration of the Government of Canada's *Reaching Home Program*, supported by a Community Advisory Board of diverse local volunteers, use PiT Count data to inform program decision making. This includes supporting the development of a Coordinated Assessment and Access system, and implementation of a Homelessness Management Information System to support the improved coordination of services throughout the region.

### Summary of Findings:

- The 1,749 homeless individuals on the night of March 25, 2025, were found across transitional housing, temporary shelters, couches, vehicles and outdoors. 607 individuals participated in the survey.
- Youth, Indigenous people, and seniors have unique experiences of homelessness – just over one-quarter of survey respondents (26.8%) are 55 and older, and 6.1% are youth under the age of 25. There are culture and age-related barriers to accessing housing as well as services. Homelessness often starts at an early age: 36.1% had their first experience of homelessness at 18 years of age or younger.
- Nearly one in three (29.7%) identify as Indigenous. This is much higher than the rate in the broader population (5%).
- Many surveyed have experienced long-term homelessness. In the past year, 73.4% had been homeless for a duration of at least 9 to 12 months. Additionally, over the past three years, 75.2% of respondents experienced homelessness for at least half of that period.
- Nearly half (48.4%) of respondents have lived in Greater Victoria for longer than five years, and an additional 22.9% having always been here. 8.7% have lived in Greater Victoria less than one year. The most

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common reasons for moving to Greater Victoria were because family moved to the area (29.5%) and to visit friends or family (15.1%).

- 12.1% of respondents reported being discharged from a hospital into homelessness. 11.6% from an emergency shelter stay, and 6.3% from a corrections facility.
- Common services and supports needed by survey respondents include access to primary care services (65.7%) and food security supports (56.8%). This was closely followed by mental health services (50.3%), official identification (46.7%), Indigenous healing/treatment (42.0%), culturally relevant services (24.3%) and Indigenous justice supports (21.3%).

The Point-in-Time Count is a partnership between:



Funded by the Government of Canada's Reaching Home Canada's Homelessness Strategy



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