



HELP Act Dashboard

Data Glossary and Guide

Released August 2025



**California
Interagency Council
on Homelessness**

Purpose

This Data Glossary and User Guide provides the information necessary to understand the context of the data used in the Homeless Equity for Left Behind Populations (HELP) Act Dashboard, and to support the interpretation and dissemination of this information.

- Section I of this guide explains the measures and terms on the HELP Act Dashboard and website, the methodologies used for each graphic, and limitations of the data in the dashboard.
- Section II explains the state's Homeless Data Integration System (HDIS), and the key methodological approaches that are implemented in HDIS to prepare the data for the dashboard.

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I. Homeless Equity for Left Behind Populations (HELP Act) Dashboard

A. HELP Act Dashboard Overview

The California Interagency Council on Homelessness (Cal ICH), housed in the California Business Consumer Services and Housing Agency, manages the HELP Act Dashboard. The [HELP Act \(Senate Bill 914\)](#) requires Cal ICH to measure progress towards ending homelessness among unaccompanied women, survivors of domestic violence, and their children. This dashboard makes the state's measures of progress publicly available. The goals and measures reported on the HELP Act Dashboard for these key populations are the following (see [Section I.D. Data Limitations](#) for information on the service providers not included in the data):

Goal Description	Measurement
Goal 1: Reducing the number of people experiencing homelessness.	Measure 1: Number of people accessing services while experiencing homelessness.
Goal 2a: Decreasing the duration of experiences of homelessness.	Measure 2a: Average number of days accessing services prior to entering a permanent destination.
Goal 2b: Reducing the frequency of homelessness.	Measure 2b: Percentage of people who return to services after having exited from services in the prior 6 months.
Goal 4: Increasing exits to permanent housing.	Measure 4: Percentage of people served who exit to permanent housing.
Goal 5: Increasing exits from unsheltered homelessness to sheltered locations.	Measure 5: Percentage of people who move into sheltered settings from unsheltered homelessness.

The HELP Act Dashboard uses data from Cal ICH's Homeless Data Integration System (HDIS) on people accessing homelessness services in California. Please see the [HDIS Overview](#) section for more information about HDIS.

For more information on the HDIS, please visit [HDIS Development and Inquiries](#). For general inquiries, please contact HDIS@bcsh.ca.gov. The data used in this dashboard will be available for download from the [California Open Data Portal](#) beginning in August 2025.

B. Glossary of Terms

Term	Description
Accessing Services while Experiencing Homelessness	<p>This describes people who receive housing and services through the homelessness response system's programs, who meet the definition of experiencing homelessness described below. Housing and services include coordinated entry/coordinated assessment, emergency shelter/haven, homelessness prevention, day shelter, permanent supportive housing or other permanent housing, rapid rehousing, street outreach, and transitional housing. Not all providers enter data into HMIS. Please see Section I.D. Data Limitations for more information.</p> <p>Cal ICH considers a person to be experiencing homelessness if they:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Accessed lodging services through emergency shelter, transitional housing, and/or safe haven projects; 2) Entered into a permanent housing project from homelessness (i.e., permanent supporting housing, housing only, housing with services, rapid re-housing); or 3) Reported living in a qualifying homeless situation at the time they accessed non-residential services. This definition only includes individuals accessing services through a provider that enters data in HMIS. <p>People are included if they entered a project before or during the report timespan and exited during or after the report timespan.</p>
Age	<p>A person's age, based on the date of birth they provided at the beginning of their enrollment in housing or services, or the calendar year select in the visualization, whichever is later. Age is calculated dynamically within a report period to match the logic for the FY 2024 HMIS Standard Reporting Terminology Glossary.</p> <p>Using Date of Birth (DoB), client age is reported based on either 1) Date of Project Entry or 2) Start of Report Year (01/01/20XX). We use the option that is most recent. This allows for client age to be updated for long project enrollments.</p> <p>Example: Suppose a client's DoB is 12/20/1999. They have one enrollment from 10/01/2023 (Project Entry Date) until 06/01/2024 (Project Exit Date).</p> <p>For a 2023 Calendar Year report this client's age would be calculated as 24. It would be counted as their age at Project Entry Date because that is later than the calendar year report period. This would include them in the 18-24 age band.</p> <p>However, the 2024 Calendar Year report would have a different</p>

	Age for Client A. Since the enrollment is active in 2024, and the Calendar Year 2024 report start date (01/01/2024) is later than the Entry Date (10/01/2023) Age would be calculated for the report start date. Their birthday passed on 12/20/2023, the client would show as age 25 on Calendar Year 2024 reports. This means they are no longer included in the 18-24 age band, but in the 25-34 age band.
California Interagency Council on Homelessness (Cal ICH)	The California Interagency Council on Homelessness (Cal ICH) focuses on purposeful, action-oriented coordination, and alignment among state departments to prevent and end homelessness in California. Cal ICH also manages the Homeless Data Integration System (HDIS). The Council was created by SB 1380 in 2017 as the Homeless Coordinating and Financing Council.
Continuum of Care (CoC)	Regional and local planning bodies defined by geographic area that address issues related to homelessness within their jurisdiction and apply for and disburse funding to various entities. There are 44 Continuums of Care in California that consist of representatives from organizations with interest in addressing homelessness in the region (such as nonprofit homeless service providers, advocates, and hospitals) as well as people with current or past lived experiences of homelessness. Each CoC manages data collected about homelessness services via a local HMIS. CoCs address issues related to homelessness by compiling data regarding homelessness and homeless services in the region; managing CoC funding applications and grants; and designing and coordinating a homelessness response system within its region.
Currently Fleeing	A survivor is considered to be currently fleeing domestic violence if they state that they are fleeing or attempting to flee a domestic violence situation, or are afraid to return to their primary nighttime residence.
Federally Recognized Tribe	An American Indian or Alaska Native tribal entity that has government-to-government relationships with the United States and possesses federal recognition of their inherent rights to self-government or sovereignty and entitlements to designated federal services and protections.
Gender	Refers to people's self-perception of their gender identity and not their assigned sex category at birth. For how Cal ICH reports gender categorizations on the dashboard, see Gender Measures on the Dashboard section.

Homeless Data Integration System (HDIS)	Cal ICH's statewide warehouse of data on people experiencing homelessness who are served by the homelessness response system. HDIS aggregates and processes locally reported information from Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS) that are maintained by each Continuum of Care (CoC). Cal ICH created HDIS in 2021 to improve statewide data collection and policy coordination.
Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)	A local-level data collection system used by Continuums of Care (CoCs) to collect data on the provision of programs and services to people experiencing homelessness or at risk of experiencing homelessness. The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires each CoC to collect client-level data in HMIS. Each CoC follows HUD data standards and might customize the HMIS in accordance with these standards to meet local realities.
Homelessness Response System	The universe of providers who enter data into their local HMIS system and serve people experiencing homelessness or at risk of experiencing homelessness to prevent and end homelessness in California. Each Continuum of Care (CoC) manages its own local homeless response system and HMIS. The universe of providers who participate in HMIS are referred to as the "homelessness response system" in this dashboard.
Household Size	The designation of a household as having one or multiple people. In this dashboard, there are two household sizes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple Adult Household: an Adult Only Household with more than one person • Single Adult Household: an Adult Only Household within exactly one person
Household Type	The composition of a household in which a person experiences homelessness. There are three household types: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult Only: households with no members under age 18 • Adults with Children: households with at least one member under the age 18, and at least one member age 18+ • Child Only: households with no members age 18+

Point-in-Time Count (PIT)	A numerical count of the number of sheltered and unsheltered people experiencing homelessness on a single night in January. The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires CoCs to complete the count of sheltered people experiencing homelessness annually and those experiencing unsheltered homelessness every other year (odd-numbered years). Each CoC is responsible for conducting its PIT count. For more information on HUD's PIT count data, see HUD's Guidance .
Survivor of Domestic Violence	Adults or heads of households who indicate they have experienced domestic violence in any of the following forms: domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking or other dangerous or life-threatening conditions that relate to violence against the individual or a family member, including a child, that has either taken place within the individual's or family's primary nighttime residence.
Race & Ethnicity	<p>Race is a person's self-identification with one or more socially defined racial categories while ethnicity is a person's self-identification with one or more groups based on shared social, cultural, and historical experiences, derived from common national or regional backgrounds.</p> <p>The data displayed on this dashboard refers to people's self-identification with one or more race and ethnicity categories included in HMIS. In accordance with the 2024 HMIS data standards, race and ethnicity data are collected using a single, combined question.</p> <p>In this dashboard, race and ethnicity are tabulated as one race or ethnicity alone, or as a race or ethnicity in combination with one or more races and ethnicities. See Race and Ethnicity Measures on the Dashboard for more information.</p>
Target Populations	Target Populations refers to specific groups within the larger populations, including unaccompanied women, survivors of domestic violence, and their children.
Unaccompanied Women	All adult women who are in a household without children at any point while accessing services during the report period.
Victim Service Provider (VSP)	A Victim Service Provider (VSP) is a nonprofit organization whose primary mission is to provide direct services to victims of domestic violence. VSPs are prohibited by Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) and the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA) from reporting data into local HMIS.

C. Graphic Descriptions and Methodologies

The Homeless Equity for Left Behind Populations (HELP) Act Dashboard is comprised of series of graphics that display the outcomes of the goals of SB 914, broken down by three target populations: Unaccompanied Women, Survivors of Domestic Violence, and Children of Survivors of Domestic Violence. The series of graphics that comprise the HELP Act Dashboard include:

1. **Goal Summary** to summarize the outcome of each goal by target population over time.
2. **Overview** tab for each target population to compare the outcome of each goal by CoC.
3. **Detail** tab for each target population to report on each goal outcome grouped by Race and Ethnicity, Gender, Age, Household Size or Household Type, and Fleeing Domestic Violence.

1. Goal Summary Graphics

Key Features:

- Each bar contains a tooltip with a description of what data that bar is showing. Hover over each bar to see the tooltip.
- Use the single-select filter on the bottom left to select a CoC that you want to view.
- The color boxes on the bottom are each labeled with a year (e.g., 2020) and serve as the color legend for the graphic (they do not filter the data when clicked). The color of the boxes is synchronized with the color of the bars on the graphics.

Goal 1 Summary Graphic: Number of People

Goal Description	Measurement
Goal 1: Reducing the number of people experiencing homelessness.	Measure 1: Number of People Accessing Services while Experiencing Homelessness.

Goal 1 Summary Graphic displays the number of people who accessed services in the homeless response system while experiencing homelessness by year by population group. The population groups included in this graphic are Children of Domestic Violence Survivors, Domestic Violence Survivors, Unaccompanied Women, and All People Experiencing Homelessness. This graphic is calculated by taking the unique count of people who accessed services while experiencing homelessness, grouping them by population and filtering by year.

- **Universe of Data:** People who accessed services in the homeless response system while experiencing homelessness
- **Calculation:** Unique count of individuals
- **Data grouped by:** Target population, Year

- **Interactive Filter(s):** CoC

Goal 2a Summary Graphic: Duration of Homelessness

Goal Description	Measurement
Goal 2a: Decreasing the duration of homelessness.	Measure 2a: Average Number of Days Accessing Services Prior to Entering a Permanent Destination.

Goal 2a Summary Graphic displays the average number of days someone experiences homelessness before moving into permanent housing by year by population group. Permanent destinations include all destinations categorized as “Permanent Housing situations” from the HUD HMIS Data Dictionary. Please refer to [Appendix: Permanent Destinations](#) for the full list of outcomes that are considered permanent.

- **Universe of Data:** People who accessed services in the homeless response system while experiencing homelessness who entered a permanent destination.
- **Calculation:** Average Days
 - Identify every enrollment that ended with a permanent destination within the year.
 - For each enrollment identified in the previous step, determine the continuous period of homelessness. A person’s continuous period of homelessness includes days in enrollments that occurred during the year or that began before the year and continued during the year, or are fewer than 7 days apart.
 - Continuous days are calculated from enrollments that were part of street outreach (SO) or other non-residential projects (while experiencing homelessness), emergency shelter (ES), transitional housing (TH), and safe haven (SH) projects, as well as time during which people were enrolled in, but had not yet moved into, rapid rehousing (RRH), permanent supportive housing (PSH), and other permanent housing (OPH) projects.
 - If a person’s continuous period of homelessness includes days in non-residential projects and night-by-night shelters, their number of days is adjusted based on records of engagement. Please see the [Buffers and Breaks](#) section for more information on the adjustment.
 - Days reported for a given year must fall within the 3-year period prior to a person’s exit from the homelessness response system in that year.
 - Count the number of days for each continuous period of homelessness to get a “total days” count per each continuous period of homelessness.
 - Calculate the average of “total days” to determine the “Average Days” experiencing homelessness.
- **Data grouped by:** Target Population, Year
- **Interactive Filter(s):** CoC

Goal 2b Summary Graphic: Frequency of Homelessness

Goal Description	Measurement
Goal 2b: Reducing the frequency of homelessness.	Measure 2b: Percentage of People who Return to Services after Having Exited from Services in the Prior 6 Months.

Goal 2b Summary Graphic displays the percentage of people who return to the services in the homelessness response system within six months of exiting the homelessness response system to a permanent destination (see [Appendix: Permanent Destinations](#)).

- **Universe of Data:** People who returned to the services in the homelessness response system within six months of exiting the homelessness response system to a permanent destination.
- **Calculation:** Return Rate
 - Identify every person who returned from a permanent destination within 6 months of their exit date. This is the "Return Total" and is the numerator.
 - Returns are identified by an "Exit Cohort". For example, for reporting on calendar year 2020 every exit from July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020 would be considered. If someone had an exit to a permanent destination on July 2, 2019 and re-engaged in services from the homeless responses system on November 1, 2020 they would be considered a person who returned.
 - Identify all people in the "Exit Cohort"; this will be the denominator
 - Calculate return rate: "Return Total" divided by "Exit Cohort."
- **Data grouped by:** Target Population, Year
- **Interactive Filter(s):** CoC

Goal 4 Summary Graphic: Exits to Permanent Housing

Goal Description	Measurement
Goal 4: Increasing exits to permanent housing	Measure 4: Percentage of People Served who Exit to Permanent Housing.

Goal 4 Summary Graphic displays the percentage of people who exited to a permanent destination. In this goal those destinations includes people who: exit to any destinations categorized as "Permanent Housing" from the HUD HMIS Data Dictionary (see [Appendix: Permanent Destinations](#)), exited from a non a non-residential project (i.e. street outreach, services only, day shelter, coordinated entry, or "other") to temporary non-street destinations outside of the homeless response system, or were enrolled in a RRH, PSH, or OPH project with a move-in date during the report period.

- **Universe of Data:** People accessed services in the homelessness response system.
- **Calculation:** Exit Rate to Permanent Housing

- Identify every person who exited to a successful destination (as defined above). This is the “Exit Total” and will be the numerator.
 - Identify all people accessing services in the homeless response system while experiencing homelessness. This is the “Accessed Total” and will be the denominator
 - Calculate exit rate: “Exit Total” divided by “Accessed Total”.
- **Data grouped by:** Target Population, Year
- **Interactive Filter(s):** CoC

Goal 5 Summary Graphic: Exits from Unsheltered Homelessness to Sheltered Locations

Goal Description	Measurement
Goal 5: Increasing exits from unsheltered homelessness to sheltered locations	Measure 5: Percentage of People who Move into Sheltered Settings from Unsheltered Homelessness.

Goal 5 Summary Graphic displays the percentage of people who exited to a sheltered setting. A shelter setting includes an emergency shelter, transitional housing, and other temporary or permanent destinations within or outside of the homelessness response system.

- **Universe of Data:** People who experienced homelessness in an unsheltered setting either while accessing services in the homelessness response system, or directly before accessing services in the homelessness response system, during a reporting period.
- **Calculation:** Exit Rate to Sheltered Settings
 - Identify every person who entered a sheltered setting after experiencing unsheltered homelessness. This is the “Entered Sheltered Total” and will be the numerator.
 - Identify all people who experienced homelessness in an unsheltered setting while accessing services or directly before accessing services in the homeless responses system. This is the “Experienced Unsheltered Total” and will be the denominator.
 - Calculate exit rate to sheltered settings: “Entered Sheltered Total” divided by “Experienced Unsheltered Total”.
- **Data grouped by:** Target Population, Year
- **Interactive Filter(s):** CoC

2. Overview Graphic

For each target population - unaccompanied women, survivors of domestic violence, and their children - the Overview tab of the HELP Act Dashboard provides a high-level, interactive summary of key performance indicators related to homelessness across California.

Map Visualization

This visualization includes a statewide map of California, divided by CoC boundaries. Hover over the map to identify the name of each CoC.

Key Metrics

To the right of the map, five core indicators are displayed:

- Number Experiencing Homelessness
- Duration of Experiences of Homelessness
- Frequency of Homelessness
- Exits to Permanent Housing
- Exits from Unsheltered Homelessness to Sheltered Locations

These indicators provide a snapshot of system performance and client experiences across the state and update based on the filters applied. For more information on the key goals and metric calculations and definitions, reference [Section I.C.](#)

Interactive Filters

At the top of the visualization, users can tailor the data view using three main filters:

- **Select a CoC** – Allows the user to view data for one or two specific Continuums of Care (CoCs), or statewide if all CoCs are selected. When selected, the associated CoC is visually highlighted on the California map. Users may not select both statewide and a CoC at the same time.
- **Select a Calendar Year** – Adjusts the reporting window. The dashboard currently includes data from calendar years 2020 through 2024.

These controls allow for a filtering of the data and supports analysis to inform planning, resource allocation, and system improvement strategies.

3. Detail Graphics

Navigating from the Overview tab to the Details tab opens a more granular view of the dashboard. While the overall layout remains similar - retaining the interactive filters for CoC selection and calendar year - the Details tab expands on the key goals by breaking them out across demographics of interest.

These breakdowns support deeper equity-focused analyses of system performance, help identify disparities in outcomes across demographic groups, and ensure the equitable distribution of services. They can inform targeted interventions and guide data-driven decision-making. The Detail Graphics consist of stacked bar charts. Each bar contains a yellow reference line, which indicates the value of the measure in the previous calendar year. Yellow reference lines do not appear if a previous year's data is suppressed due to population size.

Race and Ethnicity

Race and ethnicity data are broken out in two main formats depending on the metric type:

- For Goal 1, each race/ethnicity is displayed in a stacked bar chart with:
 - A darker bar for individuals who only identified with the selected race, labeled as "Alone"
 - A lighter bar for individuals who identified with the selected race in combination with other racial/ethnic identities, labeled as "In Combination"

- For calculated metrics (Goals 2a, 2b, 4 and 5), the visual shows a single bar per group including all people who identify as a race or ethnicity (not broken out into “Alone” and “In Combination”).

For additional information on how these race and ethnicity metrics are calculated and defined, reference [Section II.B.2](#) of this document.

Gender

Gender data are visualized in a similar structure to race:

- For Goal 1:
 - A darker bar represents individuals who exclusively identified with a single gender, labeled as “Alone”
 - A lighter bar represents individuals who selected that gender in combination with another, labeled as “In Combination”
- For calculated metrics (Goals 2a, 2b, 4 and 5), the visual shows a single bar per group (not broken out into “Alone” and “In Combination”)

For additional information on how these gender metrics are calculated and defined, reference [Section II.B.3](#) of this document.

Age

Age-based breakouts show each goal across the following age ranges:

- Under 12
- 12–17
- 18–24
- 25–34
- 35–44
- 45–54
- 55–64
- 65+

This breakout allows for age-specific analysis, which could be particularly useful when evaluating youth service outcomes. For additional information on how age is calculated and defined, reference the glossary of terms in [Section I.B](#).

Household Type and Household Size

Household Type: For Survivors of Domestic Violence and Children of Survivors the dashboard breaks down the key goals by household type to better understand outcomes by household composition.

Goals are broken out by the following household types:

- Adults Only
- Adults with Children

- Child Only

Household Size: For Unaccompanied Women the dashboards breaks down the key goals by household size.

Goals are broken out by the following household size categories:

- Multiple Adult Household
- Single Adult Household

This view supports assessment of system performance and resource needs for different household types and household sizes. For additional information on how these compositions are defined, reference the glossary of terms in [Section I.B.](#)

Fleeing Domestic Violence

The final breakout examines outcomes based on whether an individual who has experienced domestic violence was currently fleeing domestic violence at the time of data collection. This data is only collected for adults and heads of households who have experienced domestic violence. This breakout helps highlight the system's response to the safety and housing needs of individuals in crisis and is aligned with federal data standards and compliance expectations.

D. Data Limitations

This dashboard displays data collected from federally and state funded service providers that participate in CoCs' local Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS). All service providers who receive federal funding, and service providers who receive specified state funding, as mandated by A.B. 977 (2021), are required to enter data into HMIS. The dashboard does not represent people experiencing homelessness who do not access services or housing, or who access services or housing from providers that do not participate in an HMIS.

The following categories of people and service providers are either excluded or underrepresented in the data on the dashboard.

- Survivors of domestic violence are undercounted in the data because dedicated Victim Service Providers (nonprofit organizations whose primary mission is to provide direct services to victims of domestic violence) are prohibited by Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) and the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA) from reporting data into local HMIS. They maintain separate data systems.
- Veterans are undercounted in the data because they are often served through the U.S Department of Veterans Affairs, which manage their own data system. Some permanent housing programs for veterans are also captured in a separate data system from HMIS.
- The count of Native American People experiencing homelessness and accessing housing and services does not include people accessing services and housing from the 110 federally recognized tribes as tribes generally do not report data into HMIS. Native Americans in California are more likely to seek tribal-specific services than services funded through a local government, including CoCs. When they do seek services, they are sometimes turned away and at other times, miscounted. As a result, this data should

not be construed as the homelessness rates for Native Americans in California. During 2023 tribal engagements and tribal consultations, California Tribal Partners shared that the actual instances of homelessness among American Indian, Alaska Native, and Indigenous people are higher than the point-in-time count reflects for various reasons.

- Independent providers (often faith and community-based organizations) are not required to participate in HMIS but may choose to.
- Unaccompanied youth providers participate in HMIS but may be prohibited from sharing certain client-level data with HDIS.

Additionally, Yuba/Sutter CoC is not included in the data for any visualizations for year 2020. Alpine, Inyo, Mono Counties CoC is not included for the years 2020-2021. These exclusions extend to any statewide numbers.

E. Data Suppression

To protect confidentiality, group data are suppressed when they contain fewer than 11 people; other groups may be complementarily suppressed when data could be used to calculate data for groups fewer than 11 people. Bar chart sizes may be adjusted and rounded to the nearest 5 or 10 due to suppression. Some data that reflects numbers over 10 may be suppressed if the data can be used to calculate suppressed numbers in other visuals. When necessary, Cal ICH may over-suppress data to maintain de-identification protocols. For more information, see [Cal ICH Data De-Identification Guide](#).

II. Cal ICH's Homeless Data Integration System (HDIS)

A. HDIS Overview

HDIS is a statewide data warehouse that aggregates and processes data from the Homeless Management Systems (HMS) of California's 44 Continuums of Care (CoCs)—regional homelessness service coordination and planning bodies. Each CoC collects data about the people it serves, and the housing and services provided to these individuals and families in an HMS according to a set of common standards published by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and their federal partners. CoCs enter data on people experiencing or at risk of homelessness and accessing the homelessness response system into a locally managed HMS.

B. California Interagency Council on Homelessness (Cal ICH) Methodologies and Approaches

1. Discussing Homelessness

Cal ICH uses person-centered language to discuss homelessness. In this conceptualization, homelessness is an experience rather than an individual attribute. When reporting HDIS data, Cal ICH defines persons as experiencing homelessness while accessing services if they access and partake in housing and services offered through the local homelessness response system, while having a record of a living situation indicating homelessness in HMS. Services in the local homelessness response system may include Coordinated Entry/Coordinated Assessment, Emergency Shelter/Haven, Homelessness Prevention, Day Shelter, Permanent Supportive Housing or Other Permanent Housing, Rapid Rehousing, Street Outreach, and Transitional Housing.

2. Race and Ethnicity Measures

Cal ICH recognizes that the response to homelessness in California must address and reduce systemic racism and well-documented racial inequities in who experiences housing instability and homelessness, how people are served, and the outcomes achieved within the homelessness response systems. In support of Cal ICH's effort to document and analyze racial inequities, this dashboard includes data on the race and ethnicities of people experiencing homelessness who accessed homelessness services and housing.

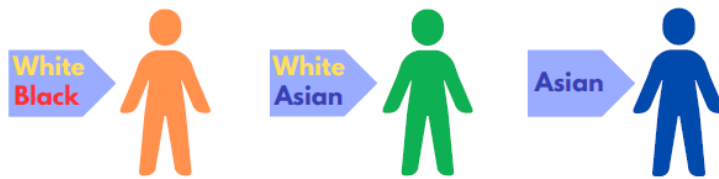
To more accurately understand the experiences of Black, indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) accessing homelessness services in California, **Cal ICH is utilizing a method of reporting race and ethnicity data whereby persons are counted in every race and ethnicity category with which they identified.** For counts of people experiencing homelessness (Goal 1), responses within each race or ethnicity category are disaggregated by the number of people that identify with a single race or ethnicity, and the number who identify with multiple races or ethnicities. Since each of a person's races or ethnicities are counted, the total number of people with each race or ethnicity will be greater than the total number of people. Goals 2a, 2b, 4 and 5 only show the total number of people who identify as each race or ethnicity, not disaggregated by people who identify with a single group or with multiple groups.

For example, an individual that identified as "Asian" and "White" would be counted in both the "Asian" and "White" categories as "In Combination with Another Race or Ethnicity."

Alternatively, an individual that only selected one race or ethnicity – for example, an individual that only identified as "Asian" – would be included in the Asian category as "One Race or Ethnicity Alone." See the table figure below for a visual example.

Here's an Example:

Here are **three people** and the race categories they identified with. The table below shows how they would be counted in Cal ICH dashboards.



Race	One Race or Ethnicity Alone	In Combination With Another Race or Ethnicity	Alone or In Combination
Black	0	+	1
White	0	+	2
Asian	1	+	2
Total	1	+	5

This approach allows Cal ICH to avoid reporting people that selected more than one race or ethnicity as “Multiple Races”, a categorization which gathers a diverse group of identities and presents them as a single entity, erroneously implying a unified history and experience.

Furthermore, categorizing multiple-race responses together undercounts groups that are more likely to identify with multiple races.

Please note: Before the 2024 HUD Standards Updates went into effect on October 1st, 2023, race and ethnicity data were collected using separate questions in HMIS. For data collected before that date, people were asked to select their race, and then to select their ethnicity. Nearly all people who identified as Hispanic/Latina/e/o also selected a race, resulting in a very large share of Hispanic/Latina/e/o people that are reported as “Hispanic/Latina/e/o In Combination with Another Race or Ethnicity.” Data collected after October 1st, 2023, is collected with a combined race & ethnicity question, meaning that Hispanic/Latina/e/o is an option alongside the other race categories. As Cal ICH incorporates HDIS data collected after the Data Standards Update into the dashboard, the data may reflect an increase in “Hispanic/Latina/e/o Alone” responses.

3. Gender Measures on the Dashboard

Cal ICH is grouping people in three categories pertaining to gender: Men, Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming (TGNC), and Women. The “Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming” category includes any person who is transgender, non-binary, questioning, has a culturally specific identity, and/or has a different identity.

Each person is counted in each category that represents their gender. To understand the differences in experiences between people who hold one or multiple gender identities, for counts of people experiencing homelessness (Goal 1), responses within each gender category are disaggregated by the number of people in a single gender category, and the number of people in multiple gender categories. Since each of the gender categories a person identifies with are counted, the total number of people with each gender category will be greater than the total number of people. For example, a transgender woman is counted in both the “Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming” and “Women” categories as “In Combination.” Alternatively, a transgender person who does not identify in other categories is counted in the “Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming” category as “Alone.” See the table figure below for a visual example.

Here’s an Example:

Here are **three people** and the gender categories they identified with. The table below shows how they would be counted in Cal ICH dashboards.



Gender	One Gender Alone		In Combination With Another Gender		Alone or In Combination
Man	0	+	1	=	1
Woman	0	+	2	=	2
TGNC	1	+	1	=	2
Total	1	+	4	=	5

Goals 2a, 2b, 4 and 5 only show the total number of people in each gender category (“Alone or In Combination”), not disaggregated by people in a single gender category or multiple gender category.

4. Buffers and Breaks

The measures include adjustments to account for more difficult data collection conditions in non-residential projects (Street Outreach, Supportive Services Only, Day Shelter, Coordinated

Entry, or "other" project types) and Emergency Shelters that use the night-by-night bed tracking method. Enrollments in these project types are adjusted using calculations of "breaks" and "buffers" and these adjusted enrollments are used to determine a person's homelessness status during the report period.

Buffers:

Non-residential projects serve both people experiencing homelessness and those who are not currently experiencing homelessness. To track whether a client is experiencing homelessness, a Prior Living Situation (PLS) is recorded when the client enters the project, and then the project records a Current Living Situation (CLS) every time there is a contact with the client. The PLS and CLS document the client's living situation and housing status at the time the data is recorded. Any PLS or CLS response that indicates that the client is experiencing homelessness is referred to as a "homeless PLS" or "homeless CLS", respectively.

- If there are no homeless PLS or CLS records during the enrollment, it is excluded from the CA SPMs entirely.
- If there is no homeless PLS, the entry date (meaning the first date of a client's enrollment in an HMIS project) is reset with a buffer to 15 days before the first homeless CLS in the enrollment, or back to the original entry date, whichever is later, i.e., closer to the last recorded homeless CLS.
- If there is no homeless CLS recorded when the exit date is recorded, the exit date is reset with a buffer to 15 days after the last homeless PLS or CLS in the enrollment, or back to the original exit date, whichever is earlier.
- Even if a buffer is added, an enrollment is never made longer than the original entry and exit dates.

Night-by-night Emergency Shelters use a special type of client tracking where a client may or may not access the bed each night during an open enrollment period. Enrollments in these projects are adjusted based on the actual "bed nights" the client stayed in the project, similar to the adjustments made for non-residential projects.

- If an enrollment has no bed night dates:
 - The original entry date is retained as the entry date.
 - The earlier of the original exit date, or the entry date plus a 15-day buffer, is used as the exit date.
- If an enrollment has a homeless PLS, the original entry date is retained as the entry date.
- If an enrollment does not have a homeless PLS, but does have bed night dates, then the entry date is "reset" to the first bed night date (which may be the same as the original entry date).
- If an enrollment has a bed night date on the original exit date, then the original exit date is retained as the exit date.
- If an enrollment has bed night dates, but does not have a bed night date on the original exit date, then the earlier of the original exit date, or the last bed night date plus a 15-day buffer, is used as the exit date.
- Even if a buffer is added, an enrollment is never made longer than the original enrollment entry and exit dates.

Buffers: Examples

How Buffers Might Affect the Data for Night by Night Shelters



How Buffers Might Affect the Data for Non-Residential Projects



The *How Buffers Might Affect the Data for Night by Night Shelters* image above shows the concept of "buffers" and how it could affect client enrollment records. In this example, a client enrolled in a night-by-night Emergency Shelter on January 1, 2020 with a homeless PLS. They had one bed night date recorded, on January 5, 2020, followed by three years of no bed nights entered. They had a project exit date recorded on February 1, 2023. Using the buffer concept described above, the client's exit date is reset to 15 days after the last bed night recorded, and the "reset" exit date is now January 20, 2020. Their length of time homeless for this project enrollment would be calculated from January 1, 2020 through January 20, 2020.

Breaks

Often non-residential projects do not formally exit people from their project in HMIS, since a project may not know in advance when a person is going to complete their assistance. Because of this, enrollments can stay open for months or even years with only occasional client contact.

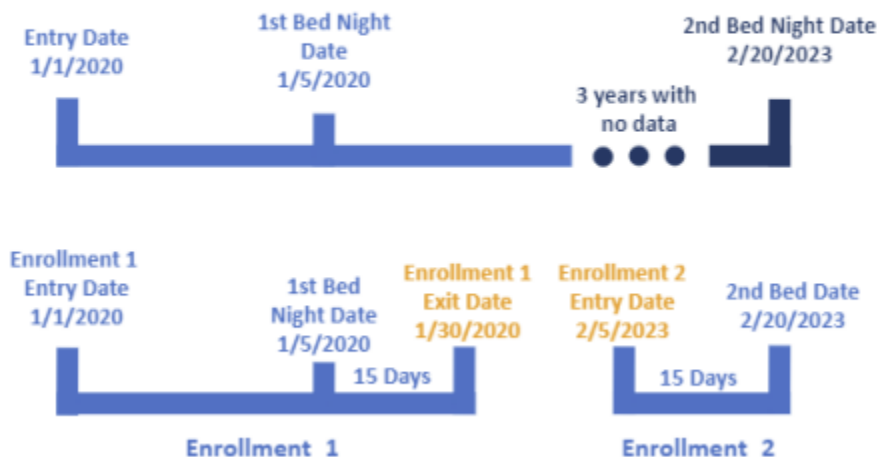
- If there are fewer than 60 days between bed night or CLS dates within a single project enrollment, that is considered one enrollment.
- Whenever there are breaks of 60 days or longer between bed night or PLS/CLS dates in a single enrollment, the enrollment is split into two enrollments. A new project exit date is added with a 15-day buffer after the first of the two bed nights or CLS dates. A second enrollment is created with an entry date 15 days prior to the second of the two

separated bed night or CLS dates. This is repeated for as many breaks as necessary for an enrollment.

- Where new enrollments are created with new exit dates established, the exit destination is counted as “unknown” since the project would not know the client's exit destination if there was no contact with the client.

Breaks: Examples

An Example of How Breaks Affect the Data



The *An Example of How Breaks Affect the Data* image above shows the concept of “breaks” and how that could affect client enrollment records. In this example, a client enrolled in a night-by-night Emergency Shelter on January 1, 2020 with a homeless PLS. They had one bed night recorded on January 5, 2020, followed by several years of no recorded bed nights until February 20, 2023. Because there are more than 60 days separating the two bed nights, the client's enrollment is split into two separate enrollments. The exit date from the first enrollment is reset to 15 days after the first bed night date, or January 30, 2020. The entry date for the second enrollment is reset to 15 days prior to the second bed night date, or February 20, 2023.

Appendix: Permanent Destinations

HUD Defined Permanent Destinations
Staying or living with family, permanent tenure
Staying or living with friends, permanent tenure
Moved from one HOPWA funded project to HOPWA PH
Rental by client, no ongoing housing subsidy
Rental by client, with ongoing housing subsidy

Owned by client, with ongoing housing subsidy
Owned by client, no ongoing housing subsidy