

NANAIMO COMMUNITY REPORT

Everyone Counts: 2024 Point-in-Time Count

Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy



November 2024



United Way
British Columbia

Working with communities in BC's
Interior, Lower Mainland, Central
& Northern Vancouver Island

This project is funded by
the Government of Canada.

Canada

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MESSAGE FROM SNUNEYMUXW FIRST NATION

On behalf of Snuneymuxw First Nation, I raise my hands to all those who contributed to the 2024 Nanaimo Point-in-Time (PiT) Count Final Report on Homelessness.

For generations, Snuneymuxw has fought to uphold our inherent rights and responsibilities to the land and the people connected to our rich and abundant territory. The Snuneymuxw Homeless Outreach Program reflects our Nation's commitment to caring for the people, providing those experiencing homelessness with compassion, advocacy, and meaningful support, including help with housing, harm reduction, and addiction services.

Snuneymuxw First Nation stands firm in our commitment to working alongside local governments and service providers to ensure safe, stable, and culturally appropriate housing for all.

Chief Michael Wyse (Xum'silum)

STRENGTH IN INTERDEPENDANCE

The bull kelp featured on the cover of this report is more than an image of the sea, it is a reflection of how Snuneymuxw understands care, responsibility, and resilience. Kelp forests root themselves to the seabed and rise through shifting currents, offering protection, nourishment, and balance to the ecosystems around them. They do not thrive alone, but through connection.

Snuneymuxw approaches the work of addressing homelessness in this same way: with a commitment to care for all who live on these lands, and an understanding that wellbeing is rooted in relationships. Through environmental restoration, housing initiatives, and community-based leadership, the Nation continues to uphold its role as caretakers of territory and people.

This report reflects that approach. Led by Snuneymuxw and shaped through community voices, it carries forward a vision that is grounded, accountable, and rooted in the teachings of interdependence. Like the kelp that shelters life beneath the surface, the work ahead must center safety, stability, and connection for those pushed to the margins. It is not enough to respond to crisis, we must hold each other up.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2024 Nanaimo Point-in-Time (PiT) Count marks a historic milestone as the first count led by Snuneymuxw First Nation, working in partnership with the local governments, service providers, and community volunteers. This leadership reflects a growing commitment to Indigenous-led approaches and culturally grounded data practices. The findings emerge at a time of deepening urgency. Homelessness in Nanaimo is increasing at an alarming rate. For Indigenous people, however, this is not a new crisis. It is a visible outcome of generations of colonial harm. The data reveals a complex intersection of housing insecurity, systemic barriers, and intergenerational trauma that continues to shape the daily realities of Indigenous people.

Indigenous people continue to be vastly overrepresented. While comprising approximately 8.2 percent of Nanaimo's general population¹, over one-third (~36 percent) of survey respondents identified as First Nations, Métis, or Inuit. This mirrors findings from previous years and reflects the enduring impacts of colonization, displacement, and systemic inequities. Nearly half of Indigenous respondents had a history of foster care, and a significant number reported intergenerational trauma linked to Residential Schools.

The count identified 621 individuals experiencing homelessness, which is a 20.6 percent increase from 2023 and a 257 percent rise since 2016.

Health challenges remain widespread. Two-thirds of respondents disclosed mental health conditions, and three-quarters reported substance use issues. The average respondent faced multiple, compounding health concerns. These figures were consistent across Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations, underscoring the need for integrated housing and healthcare solutions.

The data also show a strong connection between homelessness and experiences in the child welfare system. Over one-quarter of respondents (24%) had lived in foster care (118 out of 474), and nearly 44 percent of Indigenous respondents. This highlights a critical area for intervention in supporting youth aging out of care, particularly Indigenous youth.

Justice system involvement was reported by 13 percent of respondents, though only 6 respondents (around 1%) attributed their housing loss directly to incarceration. However, approximately 63% (roughly 3 in 5) of respondents reported at least one police interaction in the past year, reflecting the visibility and criminalization of homelessness.

¹ Statistics Canada. (2022). Indigenous identity population, 2021 Census of Population, Nanaimo [Census Metropolitan Area]. Retrieved from <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/as-sa/fogs-spg/page.cfm?dguid=2021A00035921&lang=e&topic=8>

The 2024 findings reinforce what Snuneymuxw has long known: homelessness in our territory is deeply rooted in systemic inequities, colonial displacement, and the erosion of affordable housing. Most respondents expressed a desire for permanent homes and identified clear solutions, including culturally safe supports, stable income, and housing with wraparound care. Despite important new initiatives, the data highlights that existing responses remain insufficient to meet the scale and urgency of the crisis.

The 2024 findings reaffirm the deep-rooted nature of homelessness in Snuneymuxw territory, shaped by systemic inequities, colonial displacement, and the erosion of affordable housing. While important steps have been taken and new initiatives offer promise, the data highlights that existing responses remain insufficient to meet the scale and urgency of the crisis. Snuneymuxw First Nation continues to lead with a vision grounded in dignity, accountability, and cultural strength. Government, service providers, and community stakeholders are encouraged to work in partnership with Snuneymuxw to advance coordinated, equity-driven solutions and address these systemic inequalities.

DEFINITIONS AND TERMINOLOGY

Snuneymuxw people have lived on these lands since time immemorial, as caretakers of a territory rich in history, culture, and connection. In this context, homelessness is not merely the absence of housing. It is the visible result of systems that have disrupted Indigenous relationships to land, family, identity, and community. The definitions that follow are grounded in that understanding and reflect the lived realities of those most impacted by homelessness in Snuneymuxw territory.

Homelessness – More than just the absence of a house, homelessness is a loss of land, culture, safety, and connection. In the context of Indigenous peoples, it is deeply tied to the impacts of colonization, residential schools, and systemic displacement.

Indigenous Homelessness – A distinct experience of homelessness that includes not only the loss of physical housing but also the disconnection from land, family, identity, and traditional ways of life. Many Indigenous people experiencing homelessness are guests on the lands of other Nations, seeking safety and stability within an imposed colonial system.

Unsheltered Homelessness – People living outside, in encampments, vehicles, or public spaces because they have no secure place to stay. In Snuneymuxw territory, this often includes people living along waterways, parks, and urban spaces that were once village sites.

Sheltered Homelessness – Those staying in emergency shelters, safe houses, or temporary transitional housing but still without permanent, stable housing. Many in this category remain at risk of returning to homelessness due to a lack of affordable options.

Encampments – Community-formed spaces where people without housing come together for safety and survival. These spaces exist because colonial systems have failed to provide adequate housing, and they reflect the resilience of those who have been left without options.

Overdose Crisis – An ongoing emergency disproportionately affecting Indigenous and unhoused people due to the toxic drug supply, criminalization, and systemic neglect. The crisis is fueled by a lack of culturally safe health supports, stable housing, and decolonized approaches to healing.

Housing First – A principle that recognizes housing as a basic human right, not something that must be earned. This approach provides permanent housing without conditions and ensures that people have the support they need to remain housed.

Harm Reduction – A way of reducing harm caused by colonial drug policies and criminalization. This includes access to safe supply, supervised consumption sites, naloxone, and culturally grounded supports that do not punish people for substance use.

Supportive Housing – Permanent housing that includes wraparound supports such as mental health care, cultural healing programs, and peer-led initiatives. Supportive housing should be designed with Indigenous leadership to ensure it is safe and accessible for all.

These definitions provide a foundation for understanding the data and themes discussed in this report. They also highlight the complexity of homelessness and the various interventions needed to support individuals in achieving long-term stability. This complexity is shaped by the local context. In Nanaimo, rapid population growth and escalating housing costs continue to push more individuals into housing precarity. While over 1,100 new units were approved in 2023², technically enough to meet population growth, affordability remains out of reach for many. Average rent rose to \$1,446 per month³, and the typical price of a single-family home remained above \$827,617⁴. Wage growth and income supports have not kept pace with these increases. For individuals already facing health challenges, systemic discrimination, or poverty, these pressures are not just economic, they are life-altering. Understanding these local dynamics is essential for interpreting the data in this report, and for shaping responses that address both the immediate and structural drivers of homelessness in Snuneymuxw territory.

² City of Nanaimo. (2024). *2024 State of the Nanaimo Economy*, p. 2. Retrieved from <https://www.nanaimo.ca/docs/doing-business/economic-development/2024-nanaimostateeconomy-spreads.pdf>

³ City of Nanaimo. (2024). *2024 State of the Nanaimo Economy*, p. 31. Retrieved from <https://www.nanaimo.ca/docs/doing-business/economic-development/2024-nanaimostateeconomy-spreads.pdf>

⁴ City of Nanaimo. (2024). *2024 State of the Nanaimo Economy*, p. 3. Retrieved from <https://www.nanaimo.ca/docs/doing-business/economic-development/2024-nanaimostateeconomy-spreads.pdf>

Methodology

The 2024 Nanaimo Point-in-Time (PiT) Count was conducted on November 26th 2024, and offers a snapshot of homelessness in the region at a single point in time. Led for the first time by Snuneymuxw First Nation in partnership with support from a broad coalition of partners, including the Nanaimo Systems Planning Organization (NSPO), United Way British Columbia, the City of Nanaimo, Canadian Mental Health Association Mid-Island, Island Health, Nanaimo Community Safety Officers, and trained volunteers from community organizations and Vancouver Island University. The count itself was carried out with support from local service providers, outreach teams, and trained volunteers. This year's effort followed national best practice as outlined in *Everyone Counts: A Guide to Point-in-Time Counts in Canada* (4th Edition)⁵, ensuring methodological consistency with previous counts in Nanaimo and across Canada.

The PiT Count combined surveys and direct observation to enumerate individuals staying in emergency shelters, transitional housing, or unsheltered settings such as encampments, parks, vehicles, and other public spaces. Teams used a trauma-informed approach to engage individuals, with Indigenous-led outreach teams playing a central role in fostering culturally safe participation and helping to identify experiences of homelessness that may otherwise remain unseen. Snuneymuxw staff were actively involved in the training of volunteers, helping to prepare teams for respectful engagement in a range of settings. This presence was also vital in ensuring the physical and cultural safety of both participants and volunteers during the count.

While a PiT Count cannot capture every experience of homelessness, its greatest value lies in its ability to identify trends over time. The methodology allows for year-over-year comparisons using the same core questions in the same locations. This consistency enables communities to monitor changes in the scale and nature of homelessness, track demographic patterns, and assess whether local conditions are improving or worsening. These trends form the backbone of interpretation: what matters most is not just the number captured on a single night, but how that number has changed, and what that change reveals about the systems meant to support housing stability.

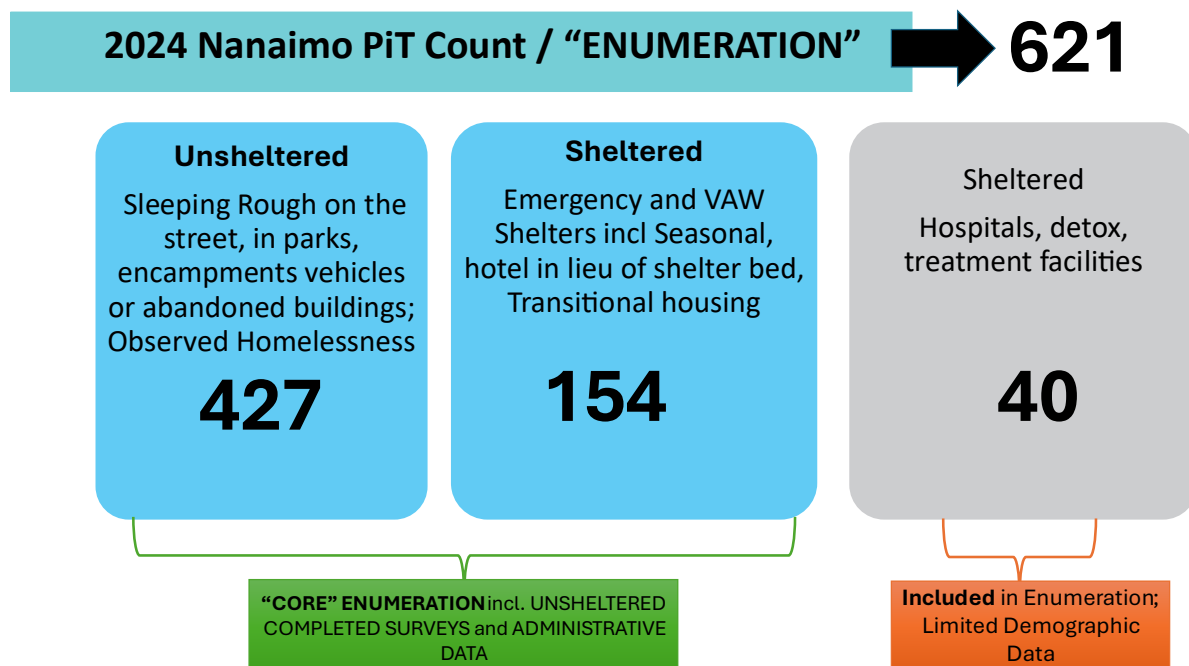
As with all counts of this nature, there are limitations. The PiT Count does not capture hidden homelessness, such as those temporarily staying with friends or family, and may undercount individuals who avoid contact with services or outreach teams. Nonetheless, the data provides a credible baseline to understand shifts in homelessness over time and to compare Nanaimo's experience with broader regional and national patterns.

⁵ <https://homelessnesslearninghub.ca/library/resources/everyone-counts-a-guide-to-point-in-time-counts-in-canada-4th-edition/>

The survey tool used in the 2024 PiT Count was largely unchanged from previous years, ensuring consistency in data collection and analysis. It included questions on demographics, housing history, causes of homelessness, service usage, and health status. The full survey is attached in Appendix 1.

Data Collection Process

Data collection for the 2024 Nanaimo PiT Count took place over a 24-hour period on November 26th 2024, using a combination of direct enumeration and survey participation. Survey teams visited emergency shelters, transitional housing, encampments, drop-in centers, parks, and other known locations across Snuneymuxw territory. This effort was coordinated by Snuneymuxw First Nation in partnership with community service providers and supported by volunteers trained in trauma-informed engagement. GIS mapping and historical location data from previous counts were used to guide coverage and Snuneymuxw outreach staff played a key role in identifying sites, supporting participant safety, and facilitating culturally appropriate engagement.



The enumeration reflects a minimum count of individuals experiencing homelessness on the night of November 25, 2024. This figure draws from two sources:

1. Administrative Data Basic demographic counts from emergency shelters (e.g., Cold Weather and Violence Against Women shelters), transition houses, and institutions such as hospitals and corrections.

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2. The PiT count Survey Responses collected on November 26 from individuals staying in public or outdoor spaces, vehicles, or other locations unfit for human habitation.

Importantly, the enumeration number (621 individuals) differs from the number of completed surveys (474). This is a key methodological distinction. The analysis and data presented throughout this report are based on survey responses, excluding any blank or unanswered questions. The enumeration provides a baseline count, while the survey data offers deeper insight into the experiences, demographics, and service needs of respondents.

A major change in 2024 was the inclusion of observed homelessness. In prior years, Reaching Home discouraged the inclusion of individuals counted solely through observation. However, feedback from outreach staff across Canada, including Nanaimo, emphasized that many visibly unhoused individuals were being missed in the enumeration. In response, local survey teams developed and agreed on clear criteria to identify observed homelessness. Even so, this remains a conservative estimate and likely underrepresents the full scope of those living without shelter.

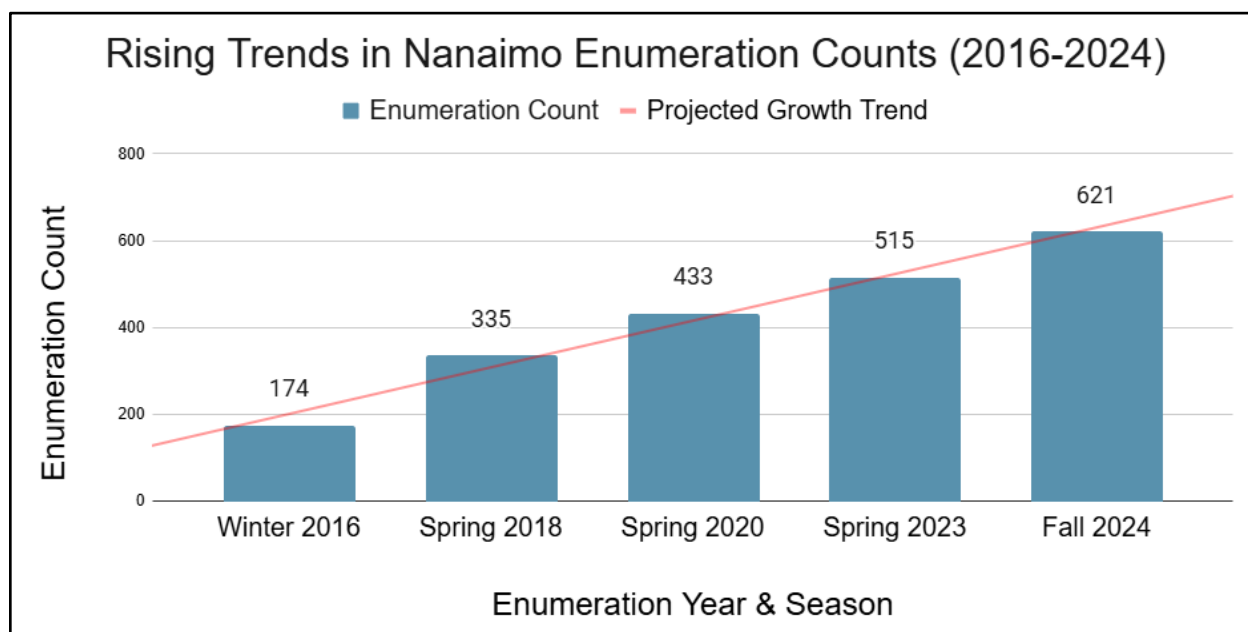
Also noteworthy in 2024 is the lower percentage of unsheltered homelessness (68.8 percent), down from 78.4 percent in 2023⁶. This shift does not reflect a permanent change in conditions but rather the temporary availability of 64 seasonal emergency shelter beds that were open during the count. These are beds that were not available in 2023. The data underscores the reality that unsheltered rates can be significantly affected by seasonal capacity, rather than structural improvements.

The PiT Count does not capture hidden homelessness. Those individuals who are couch-surfing or staying in overcrowded or unsafe conditions. This is particularly relevant in Indigenous communities, where extended families often take one another in despite inadequate housing. Snuneymuxw outreach staff noted during the count that many community members remain in unstable situations that fall outside the visible reach of this methodology. These limitations must be considered when interpreting the findings.

Trends & Limitations

The chart below illustrates a significant upward trend in the number of individuals enumerated during PiT Counts in Nanaimo from 2016 to 2024:

⁶ United Way British Columbia. (2024). 2023 Nanaimo Point-in-Time Count Community Report. Retrieved from <https://uwbc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/2023-Nanaimo-PiT-Count-COMMUNITY-REPORT-FINAL-jan-2024.pdf>



This consistent rise from 174 individuals in 2016 to 621 in 2024 highlights the growing scale of homelessness in the region. Although national enumeration efforts were disrupted during the COVID-19 pandemic, the steady increase between 2020, 2023, and 2024 reinforces the urgent need for both immediate and long-term responses. These include increased access to affordable and supportive housing, culturally safe health services, and housing-first approaches. The data supports what is being observed locally: more people are living without housing, and the pressure on shelters and outreach services continues to grow.

As with all PIT Counts, this survey provides a minimum estimate rather than a full picture of homelessness in Nanaimo. Several limitations must be considered:

- Hidden homelessness: The count does not include individuals staying temporarily with friends or relatives, or those in overcrowded, unsafe, or unstable housing situations.
- Survey non-participation: Some individuals declined to take part due to stigma, mistrust, or fatigue, which affects the scope of available data.
- One-day snapshot: The count reflects conditions on a single day and does not account for people who move in and out of homelessness over time.
- Indigenous-specific challenges: Indigenous homelessness often involves disconnection from land, language, and family networks. Many people may not identify with Western definitions of homelessness, even if their living situation is unstable or unsafe.

Despite these constraints, the 2024 PiT Count remains a vital tool for tracking local trends, informing service planning, and shaping future responses in Snuneymuxw territory. The findings underscore both the scale of the challenge and the opportunity to strengthen coordinated, culturally appropriate action.

Survey Response Rate

The 2024 Nanaimo Homeless Enumeration provides a snapshot of individuals experiencing homelessness in the region. Of those identified, 474 individuals completed the survey, offering insights into their lived experiences, service use, and barriers to housing. These survey responses form the basis of the analysis throughout this report. Additionally, individuals who were observed as homeless, or recorded through administrative data, were included in the overall enumeration but did not complete a survey and are not included in the respondent-based analysis.

Location	2023	2024
Unsheltered: vacant building, makeshift shelter, tent, or shack, other unsheltered location unfit for human habitation, public spaces, or a vehicle, Encampments	399	320
Sheltered: (Transitional Shelter / Housing, Emergency Shelter, Domestic Violence Against Women Shelter, Hotel Paid by City Program)	26	117
Jail, Prison, Hospital	3	5
'Hidden' Homeless (e.g. Staying at someone else's place)	21	30
Unsure	4	2
TOTAL	453	474

It is worth noting that the number and percentage of respondents who reported being unsheltered has declined compared to the 2023 count. In 2024, 320 respondents reported staying in public or outdoor spaces, compared to 399 in 2023⁷. A major factor contributing to this decline is the temporary availability of two Seasonal Emergency Shelters, which provided up to 64 beds during the 2024 count. These shelters were not operating during the 2023 count. When we combine the 320 unsheltered survey respondents with the estimated 64 individuals who stayed in these temporary shelter spaces, the total (384) closely matches the 2023 unsheltered figure of 399.

This change highlights an important shift in enumeration methodology in Nanaimo. For the first time, individuals staying in temporary, seasonal shelters were included in the shelter category, reducing the unsheltered count and bringing local practice in line with national guidance. While this reclassification affects year-to-year comparisons, it more accurately reflects how shelter

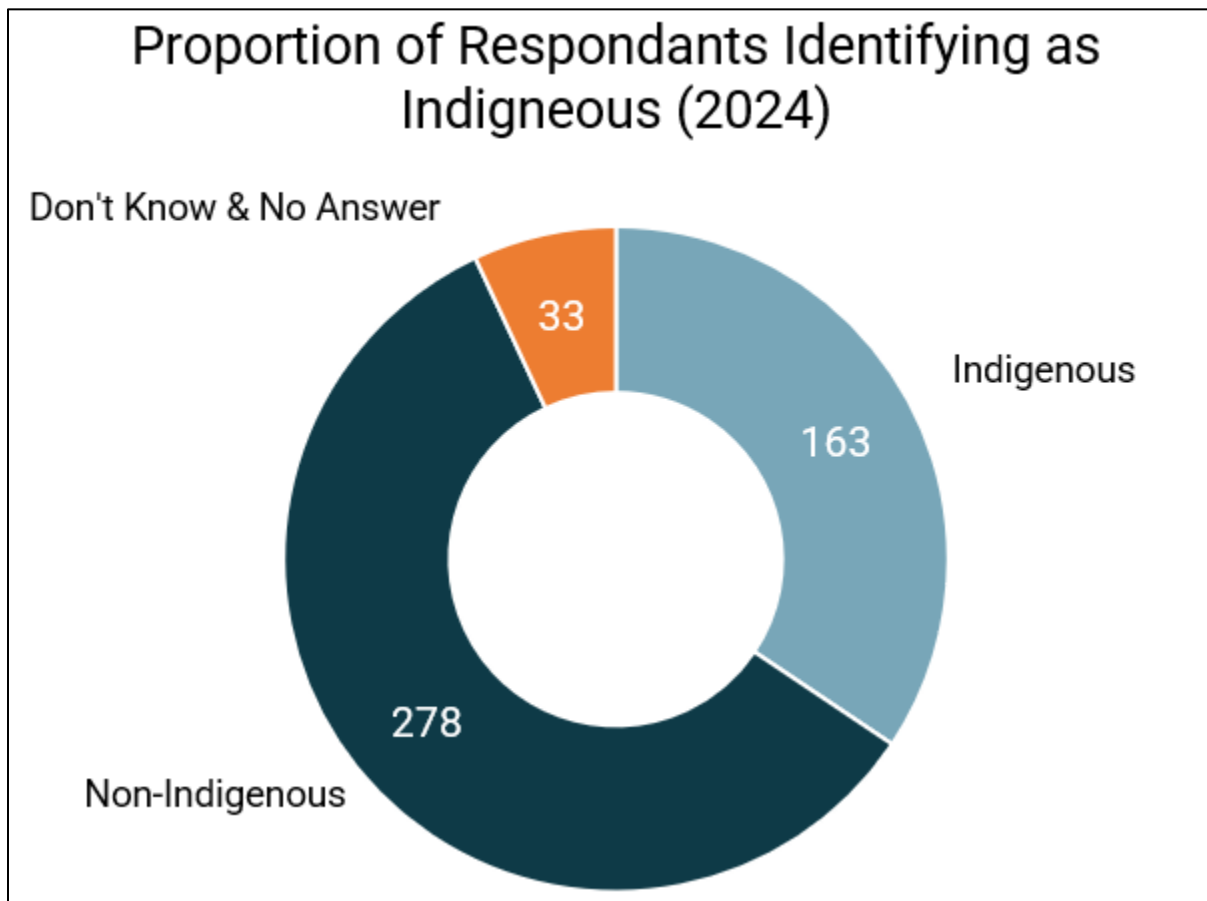
⁷ United Way British Columbia. (2024). 2023 Nanaimo Point-in-Time Count Community Report. Retrieved from <https://uwbc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/2023-Nanaimo-PIT-Count-COMMUNITY-REPORT-FINAL-jan-2024.pdf>

space availability can influence the visibility of unsheltered homelessness on the day of the count.

Even with this adjusted interpretation, the proportion of people living outdoors or in unsuitable spaces remains high and continues to place Nanaimo among the Canadian communities with the highest rates of unsheltered homelessness. This remains a major concern for local governments, service providers, and Indigenous partners, particularly given the continued overrepresentation of Indigenous people in both unsheltered and overall homelessness. These trends are explored further in the following section.

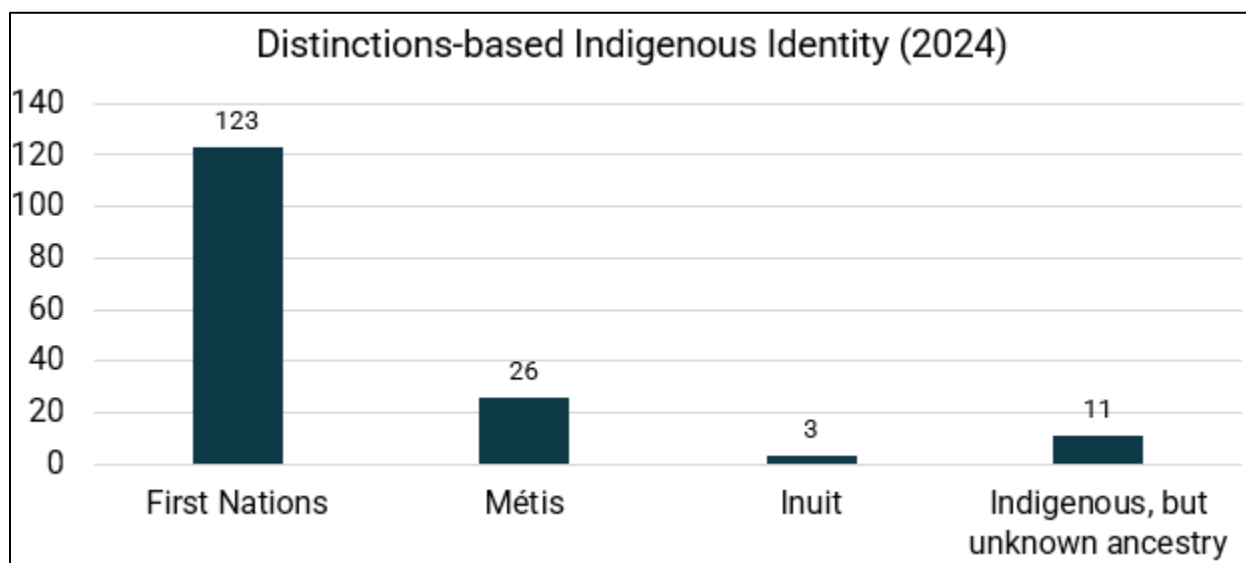
INDIGENOUS HOMELESSNESS IN NANAIMO

Indigenous people remain vastly overrepresented among those experiencing homelessness in Nanaimo. Of the 458 individuals who responded to the identity question on the Housing Needs Survey, 163 people, or 35 percent, identified as First Nations, Métis, or Inuit. In contrast, Indigenous people comprise approximately 8.2 percent of the general population in Nanaimo according to the 2021 Census⁸. This disparity reflects a long-standing pattern and underscores the impacts of colonization, systemic racism, and intergenerational displacement.



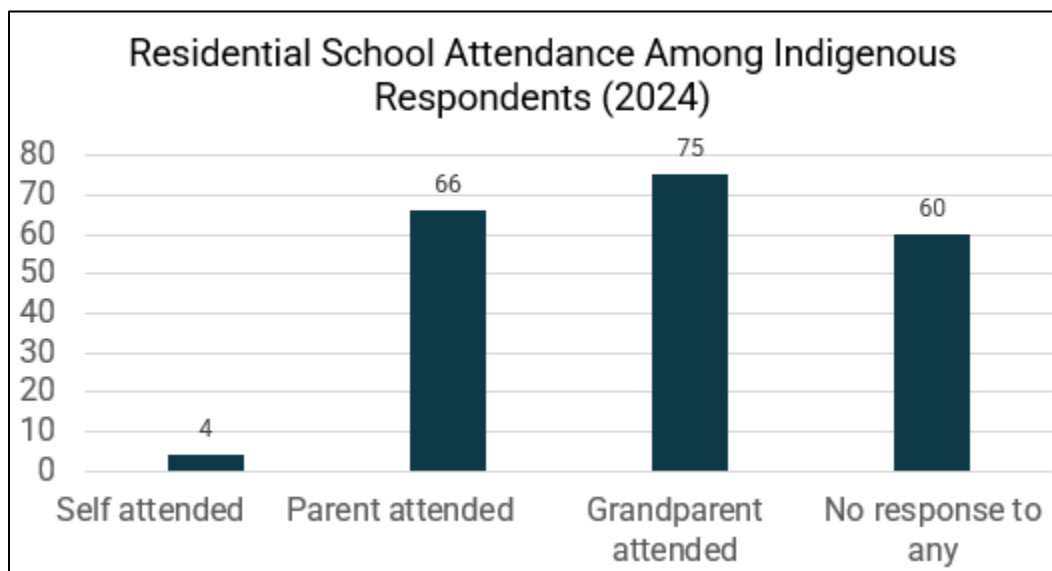
Of the 163 Indigenous respondents, 123 identified as First Nations, 26 as Métis, and 3 as Inuit. Eleven additional individuals identified as Indigenous but were unsure of their specific ancestry.

⁸ <https://www.nanaimo.ca/docs/doing-business/economic-development/2024-nanaimostateeconomy-spreads.pdf>



Underreporting and Intergenerational Trauma

While 163 individuals explicitly identified as Indigenous through the First Nations, Inuit and Metis identity question, additional responses suggest this number may understate the true extent of Indigenous homelessness. Eleven additional individuals selected “Indigenous” only under the race question but not the identity question. Another 9 whose Indigenous identity was not captured through either question, disclosed that themselves, a parent or grandparent had attended Indian Residential School. This suggests the actual number of participants of Indigenous ancestry may be higher (potentially up to 183 when considering these additional indicators) even if not all self-identified in the primary survey question.



This highlights a known limitation of the survey methodology: not all Indigenous individuals choose to identify through formal questions, especially when trust in institutions remains low. Still, indicators such as family experience with Residential Schools and patterns of intergenerational trauma remain evident in the data and continue to shape housing instability in Indigenous communities.

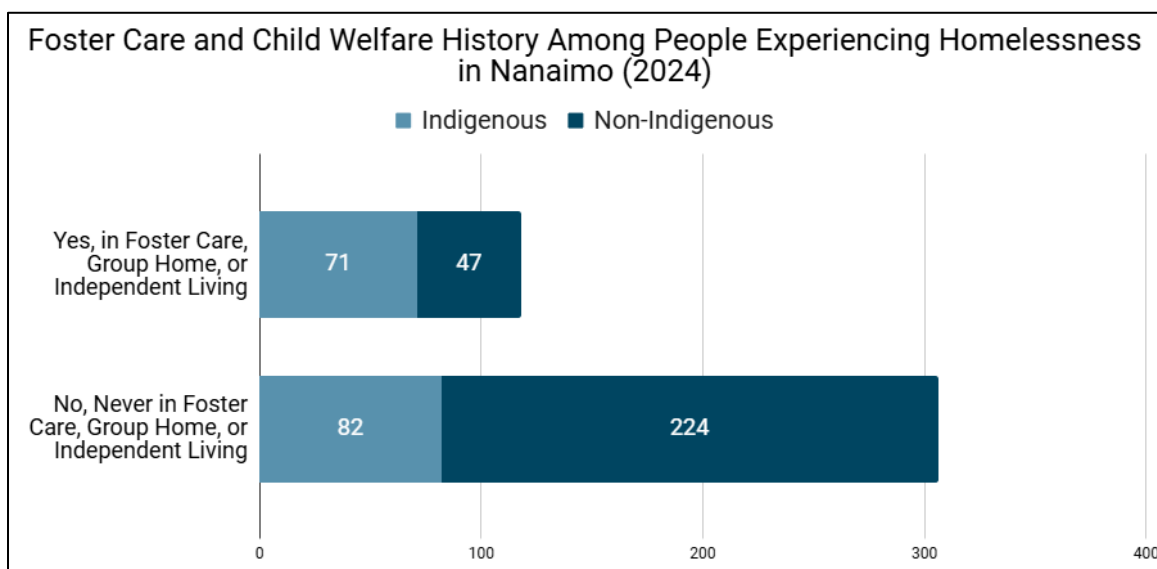
The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada documented the lasting consequences of Residential Schools:

"The intergenerational effects of the trauma include lower levels of educational and social attainment, interpersonal violence, and broken relationships between parents and children." - Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015.

This context underscores the importance of recognizing and addressing the intergenerational trauma that continues to affect Indigenous communities today. It also reinforces the need for culturally safe spaces that support Indigenous individuals experiencing homelessness. These spaces must acknowledge lived history, community ties, and healing practices. The leadership of Snuneymuxw First Nation in the 2024 count was instrumental in creating these conditions. By guiding volunteer training, identifying culturally significant sites, and leading engagement with community members, Snuneymuxw helped ensure that many Indigenous voices and experiences, often overlooked in institutional counts, were more accurately reflected in this year's data.

Overrepresentation in Foster Care

Indigenous respondents were significantly overrepresented among individuals who had experienced foster care or group home placements. Of the 118 individuals who reported a history of foster care, group home, or independent living arrangements, 71 identified as Indigenous (60%), despite Indigenous respondents making up a smaller overall proportion of the surveyed population. In comparison, only 47 non-Indigenous respondents (40%) reported similar experiences.



This stark disparity underscores the ongoing legacy of colonial policies and systemic discrimination, which continue to disproportionately affect Indigenous families. The forcible removal of Indigenous children from their families has frequently resulted in long-term instability, trauma, and a heightened risk of homelessness in adulthood. This phenomenon, often described as the foster care-to-homelessness pipeline, highlights the urgent need for culturally safe supports tailored specifically to Indigenous youth aging out of the child welfare system.

Respondents who had lived in foster care or group homes identified several primary factors that led to their most recent loss of housing:

Reason	Count
Conflict (spouse/parent/landlord/other)	73 (61%)
Financial instability (not enough income)	51 (43%)
Other	22 (18%)
Abuse (spouse/parent/landlord/other)	18 (15%)

These findings highlight the complex challenges facing young adults exiting foster care, including immediate relational and financial hardships. Without sufficient support networks or adequate resources, youth frequently face a precarious transition into independent living.

Collectively, these patterns demonstrate the profound impact that early involvement with the foster care system can have on long-term housing stability. For Indigenous youth, these challenges are amplified by ongoing colonial impacts, including disconnection from family, community, and cultural supports. Effective solutions must therefore be Indigenous-led,

culturally informed, and focused not only on immediate housing placement but also on long-term healing, connection, and self-determination.

Health Disparities and Systemic Barriers

The 2024 survey responses suggest that Indigenous individuals experiencing homelessness in Nanaimo may face elevated health-related challenges compared to non-Indigenous respondents. Self-reported rates of mental health issues, addiction, and brain injury were somewhat higher among Indigenous participants.

Indigenous respondents also reported slightly higher use of emergency health services, including mental health supports and hospital emergency rooms. These findings may reflect the ongoing impacts of trauma, structural barriers to primary care, and limited access to culturally safe health services. However, the data must be interpreted with caution. Individual willingness to disclose health information and access services can vary based on experience, stigma, and systemic trust.

What remains clear is that Indigenous homelessness is shaped not only by economic precarity, but by a broader web of social and health inequities. These include reduced access to consistent care, limited culturally appropriate support systems, and the enduring effects of colonial trauma. A meaningful response must include targeted investments in trauma-informed, culturally grounded health and housing supports that reflect the realities of Indigenous lives.

The Indigenous-specific data reveals an urgent crisis but also a clear pathway forward. Indigenous homelessness in Nanaimo must be understood not as an individual failure but as a consequence of structural systems that have consistently excluded and displaced Indigenous peoples. At the same time, Indigenous strength, cultural connection, and community leadership are key to addressing the crisis. Continued support for Indigenous-led responses, long-term investments in housing, and coordinated, culturally safe services are essential to moving forward in partnership with Snuneymuxw First Nation.

SURVEY RESULTS & ANALYSIS

The 2024 Nanaimo PiT Count offers a detailed snapshot of the experiences and service needs of individuals experiencing homelessness in the region. Based on 474 completed surveys, this section outlines key findings across several thematic areas, using consistent methodology and survey instruments from previous counts to support comparison over time.

It is important to recognize that Point-in-Time Counts have limited explanatory power. As a method based on anonymous self-reporting, PiT data cannot be directly validated against other

sources. While this does not mean the data is inaccurate, it does mean that findings must be interpreted with caution. The method’s external validity, or its ability to reflect broader realities or generalize beyond the count night, is limited. However, its internal validity remains strong, as the same core questions and survey approach have been used consistently since 2016. This consistency makes the PiT Count a valuable tool for identifying local trends over time.

The analysis reflects the constraints of the data while also drawing on knowledge from Indigenous leadership, service providers, and past research. Where applicable, comparisons to 2023 data are included to help illustrate meaningful shifts or continuity in the findings. All percentages and counts are derived from total respondents to each individual question, and data should be read as indicative, not conclusive.

Snuneymuxw First Nation’s leadership in the 2024 count ensured that culturally grounded outreach strategies were embedded into every step of data collection. This partnership not only supported community safety and relevance but also helped surface the experiences of Indigenous individuals who are often underrepresented or misidentified in broader data sets.

While the PiT Count does not fully capture hidden homelessness or complex systemic drivers, it does contribute to the growing understanding of homelessness in Snuneymuxw territory and the urgent need for collaborative, Indigenous-led responses.

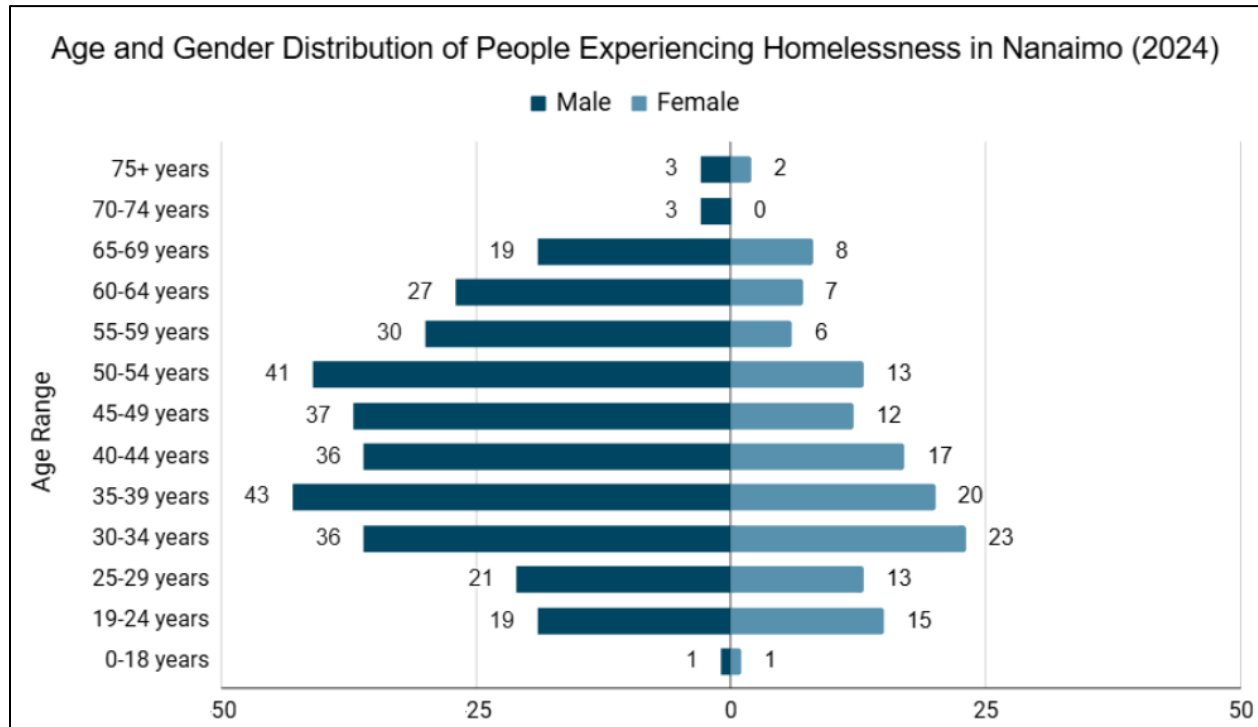
Demographic Profile

Survey respondents in 2024 represented a broad spectrum of ages and identities, reflecting the diversity of individuals experiencing homelessness in Nanaimo. However, the clearest trends remain consistent with past years: most individuals were middle-aged, and a significant majority identified as male.

Age Group	Male	Female	Total ⁹
0–18 years	1	1	2
19–24 years	19	15	34
25–29 years	21	13	35
30–34 years	36	23	62
35–39 years	43	20	66
40–44 years	36	17	57
45–49 years	37	12	50
50–54 years	41	13	57

⁹ Includes respondents who left the gender question blank or selected options outside of male/female, such as “not listed,” “transgender,” or “other.”

55–59 years	30	6	36
60–64 years	27	7	35
65–69 years	19	8	27
70–74 years	3	0	4
75+ years	3	2	8
	316	137	473



Of the 474 survey participants, 316 respondents (69.2 percent) identified as male and 137 (29.7 percent) identified as female. The remaining 21 individuals (4.4 percent) either did not answer this question or selected an alternate gender option (e.g., ‘not listed,’ ‘transgender,’ or ‘other’).” Although this group is small, it includes a handful of individuals who chose to self-identify outside of binary gender categories.

The gender disparity was more pronounced among older age groups, where men significantly outnumbered women. Among younger age brackets, particularly those aged 25 to 39, the proportion of female respondents was relatively higher.

Older adults also made up a significant portion of the survey population. Fifteen percent of respondents (71 individuals) were between the ages of 55 and 64, and an additional 8.2 percent (39 individuals) were 65 or older. These figures raise important concerns about aging in homelessness, as older individuals face increased risks related to health, mobility, and barriers to securing long-term housing. International research found that those experiencing homelessness in their 50s and 60s often have physical and mental health conditions similar to

those of housed individuals in their 70s, underscoring the urgency of age-appropriate support and permanent housing solutions¹⁰.

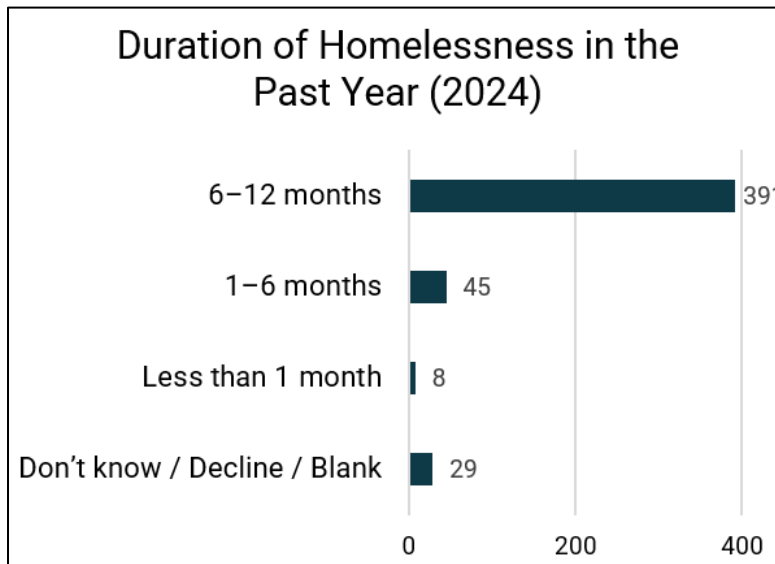
Conversely, only 7.6 percent of respondents (36 individuals) were under the age of 25. While this number appears small, it reflects broader research that shows youth homelessness is often hidden, manifesting through temporary stays, couch-surfing, or unstable arrangements that may not be captured by PiT Count methods.

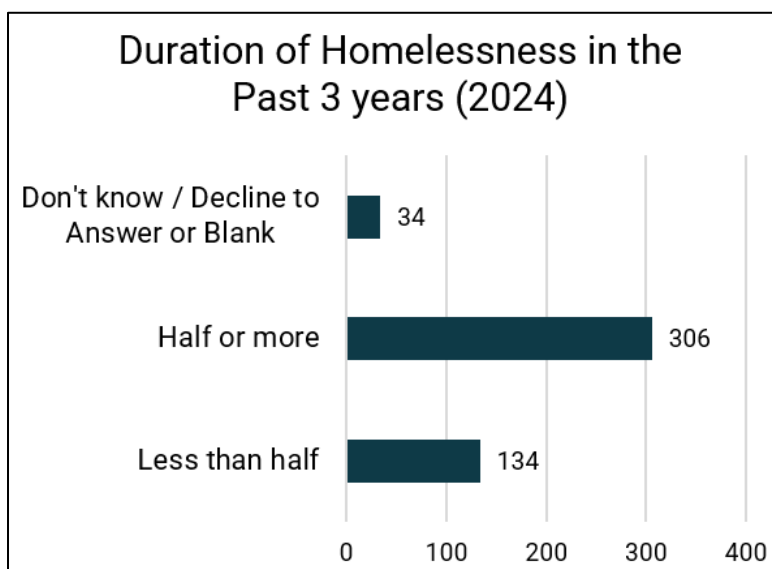
¹⁰ Benioff Homelessness and Housing Initiative. (2023). *California Statewide Study of People Experiencing Homelessness (CASPEH)*. University of California, San Francisco. Retrieved from https://homelessness.ucsf.edu/sites/default/files/2023-06/CASPEH_Report_62023.pdf

Homelessness Over the Past Three Years: A Cycle That Doesn't End

Homelessness in Nanaimo is not typically short term or episodic. For most individuals surveyed, it is an ongoing condition that spans many months or even years. These experiences reflect what service providers and communities have long recognized; that without stable, affordable housing and access to consistent support, people remain unhoused for extended periods. The 2024 PiT Count data reinforces this concern, showing that homelessness in Nanaimo continues to deepen in both scale and duration.

To better understand these patterns, respondents were asked two different questions; how long they had been homeless over the past 12 months, and how much of the past three years they had spent without stable housing. These two indicators provide insight into the chronic nature of homelessness and the extent to which individuals are cycling through or trapped within the system.



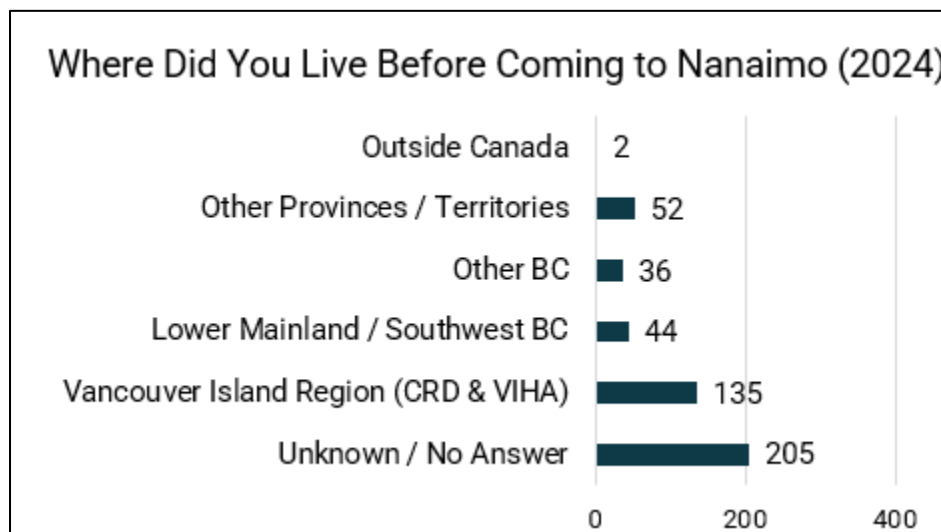
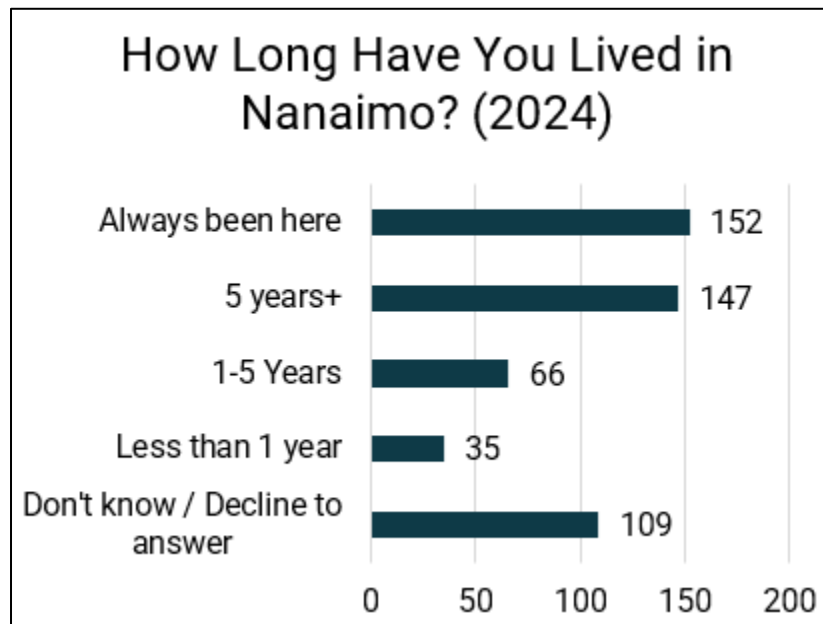


The 2024 data reveals that 391 respondents, or 85.6 percent of those who answered, reported being homeless for more than six months in the past year. This figure is even higher than the 81.2 percent reported in the 2023 PiT Count. In contrast, only 45 individuals (9.8 percent) reported being homeless for six months or less. These findings reflect a persistent, ongoing reality for most respondents, rather than a short-term disruption.

These combined indicators offer a compelling picture of chronic homelessness in Nanaimo. Most individuals are not entering and exiting homelessness quickly. Instead, many are experiencing long durations without housing, often spanning multiple years. This aligns with broader sector concerns about the increasing concentration of chronic homelessness in communities where housing supports have not kept pace with need.

Geographic Distribution & Migration Patterns

There is a widely held belief that expanding housing or shelter services in Nanaimo draws individuals experiencing homelessness from other cities or provinces. The 2024 PiT Count data offers a different picture. Most individuals surveyed had long-term ties to Nanaimo or to other communities on Vancouver Island. Rather than arriving from elsewhere in search of services, the majority appear to be experiencing homelessness in the community where they already live or have roots.



In 2024, 38 percent of respondents (152 individuals) said they had always lived in Nanaimo. Another 37 percent (147 people) had lived in the city for over five years. These figures are almost identical to 2023, when 75 percent of respondents had lived in Nanaimo for five years or more. Just 9 percent of 2024 respondents (35 people) reported living in the city for less than one year, again consistent with previous years.

When asked where they had lived prior to coming to Nanaimo, 50 percent of valid responses in 2024 pointed to the Vancouver Island region (135 of 269 respondents). Only 16 percent came from the Lower Mainland, 13 percent from other parts of BC, and fewer than 2 percent from

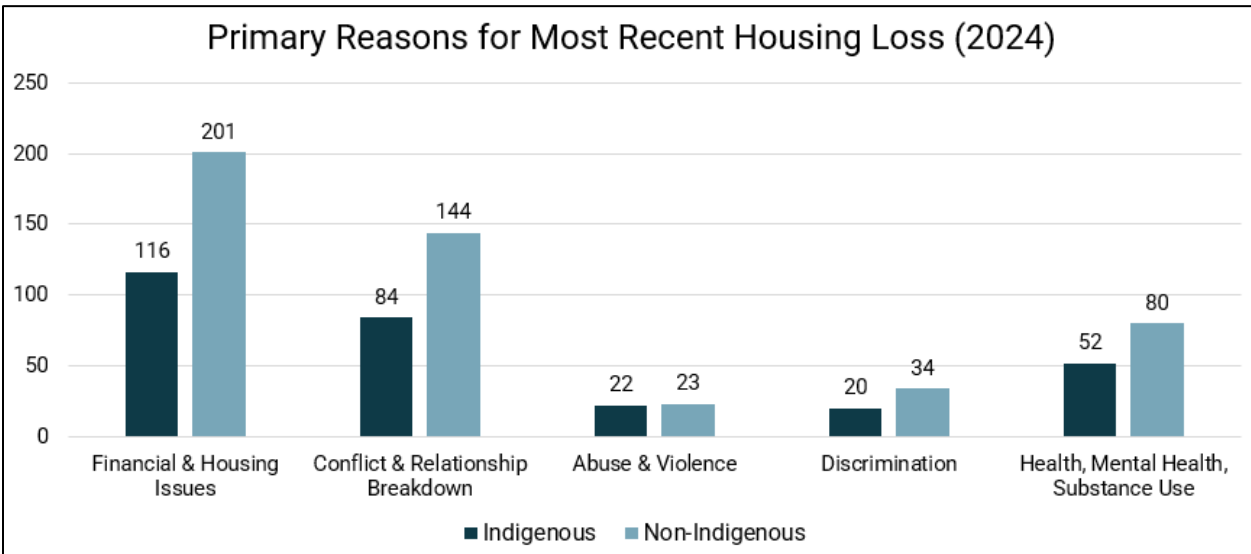
outside Canada. These proportions closely match 2023 data and reinforce the finding that most people are not relocating from far away.

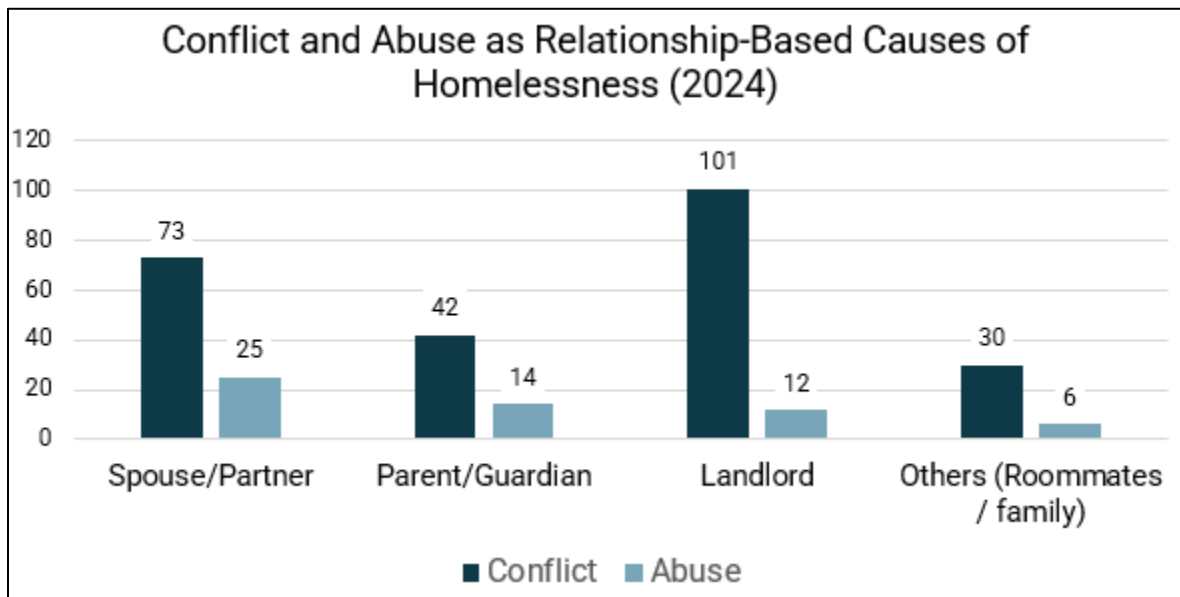
A significant number of respondents declined to answer or did not know; 109 for length of time in Nanaimo and 205 for place of prior residence. These non-responses, while limiting, were also present in the 2023 count. They may reflect privacy concerns, complex mobility histories, or discomfort with the question, especially among Indigenous respondents whose experience of movement is not always captured by colonial frameworks.

The data again suggests that homelessness in Nanaimo is overwhelmingly local. Housing and supports are not pulling people in, they are urgently needed for those who are already here. Partnership with Snuneymuxw First Nation remains critical to ensuring solutions reflect the histories, realities, and relationships of the community.

Causes of Housing Loss

While economic hardship is the most commonly cited cause of homelessness in Nanaimo, many respondents also reported losing their housing due to interpersonal breakdown, abuse, or systemic discrimination. These responses show that homelessness often begins in the context of harm, whether within families, intimate relationships, or service systems meant to support people in crisis.





In 2024, 246 individuals cited conflict as a contributor to their homelessness. Landlord-related conflict was most common (101), followed by conflict with a spouse or partner (73), a parent or guardian (42), and other household members (30). Abuse was reported by 57 people. These figures are consistent with 2023 data, which also found that landlord and partner-related issues were leading causes of housing instability. The persistence of these numbers suggests that supports for people at risk of eviction or abuse remain inadequate.

Abuse and violence were disproportionately reported by Indigenous respondents. Of the 45 people who named abuse or violence as a primary cause of housing loss, 22 were Indigenous, nearly 49 percent. This mirrors patterns seen in previous counts, but the proportion in 2024 is especially high, given that Indigenous respondents made up 34 percent of the total sample. In 2023, this same cause was reported by 37 people, with Indigenous respondents also overrepresented, but at a slightly lower ratio.

Discrimination was cited by 54 individuals in 2024, 34 of whom were Indigenous. These numbers are similar to those seen in 2023, again reflecting the systemic barriers that many Indigenous individuals face in securing or maintaining housing. These may include racism from landlords, exclusion from services, or ongoing stigma within public institutions.

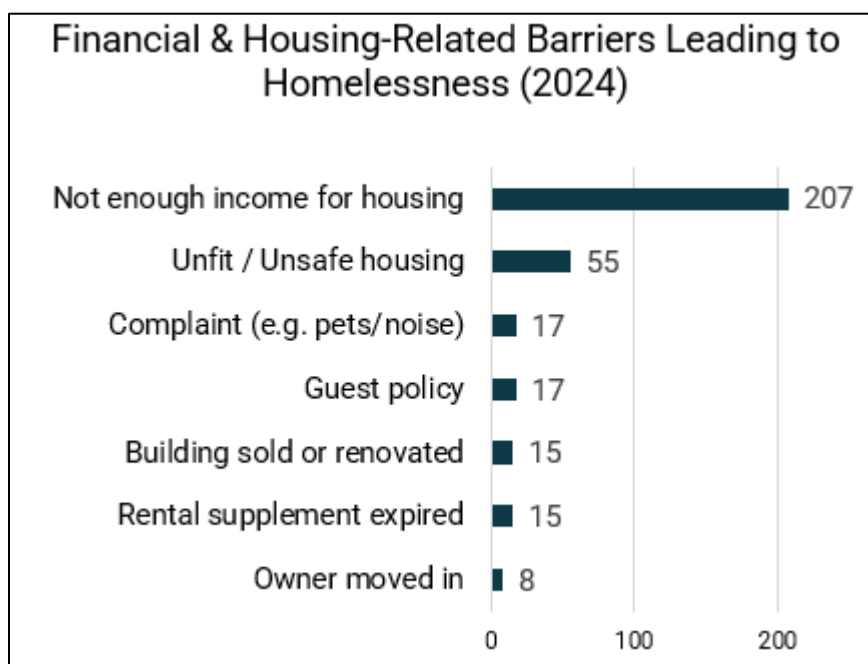
This overrepresentation is not coincidental. It reflects the cumulative impact of intergenerational trauma, systemic racism, and inadequate safety nets. The "In Plain Sight" report on Indigenous-specific racism in British Columbia's healthcare system documented how deeply embedded discrimination undermines access to services, especially for Indigenous

women and Two-Spirit people¹¹. These failures compound harm and increase vulnerability to homelessness when care is not trusted or accessible.

To reduce homelessness among Indigenous individuals, especially those impacted by abuse or violence, housing alone is not enough. Solutions must be Indigenous-led, trauma-informed, and rooted in trust and safety. Implementing recommendations from systemic reviews such as "In Plain Sight" must be part of the response, alongside long-term investments in healing supports, legal advocacy, and culturally grounded housing models.

Economic and Housing-Related Barriers

Financial barriers remain the most commonly reported cause of homelessness in Nanaimo. Respondents were asked to identify reasons why they lost their housing, and multiple selections were allowed.



The most frequently cited barrier in 2024 was not having enough income for housing, reported by 207 individuals. This represented nearly 44 percent of all respondents and aligns closely with the 2023 finding, where 201 individuals (also 44 percent) selected the same response. Economic precarity continues to be a core driver of homelessness.

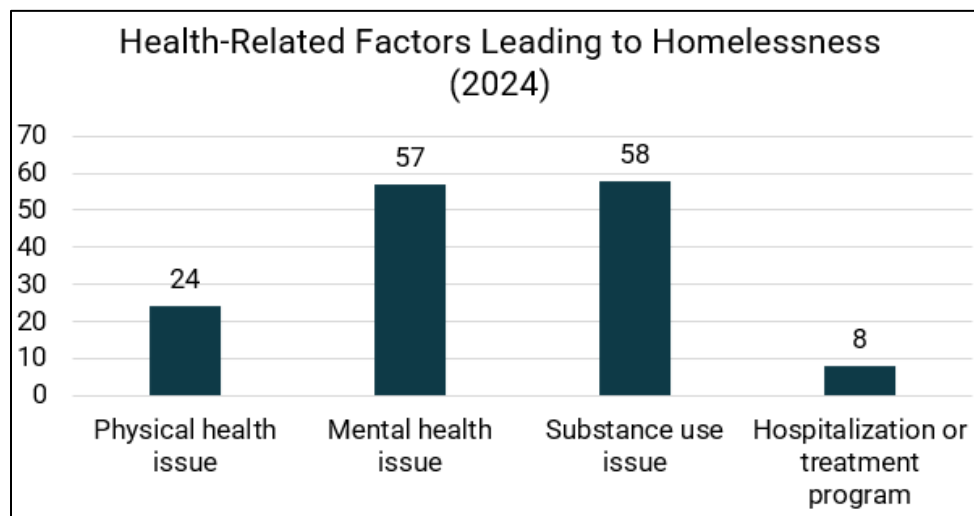
¹¹ Turpel-Lafond, M.E. (2020). *In Plain Sight: Addressing Indigenous-specific Racism and Discrimination in B.C. Health Care*. Retrieved from: <https://engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/613/2020/11/In-Plain-Sight-Summary-Report.pdf>

Compared to 2023, the distribution of economic and housing-related barriers remains consistent, suggesting that affordability and supply continue to be major concerns. The steady number of respondents citing income-related issues also reinforces concerns raised in other sections of the report about the lack of deeply affordable housing and insufficient income assistance.

Together, these responses reflect a housing system that fails to meet the needs of low-income individuals, particularly those facing additional barriers due to health, trauma, or systemic discrimination. Addressing these root causes will require sustained investments in affordable housing, income supports, and tenant protections.

Health, Mental Health & Substance Use

Health-related factors continue to play a prominent role in pathways into homelessness. The 2024 PiT Count asked respondents about the reasons they lost their housing, and many pointed to mental health and substance use challenges as key contributing factors.

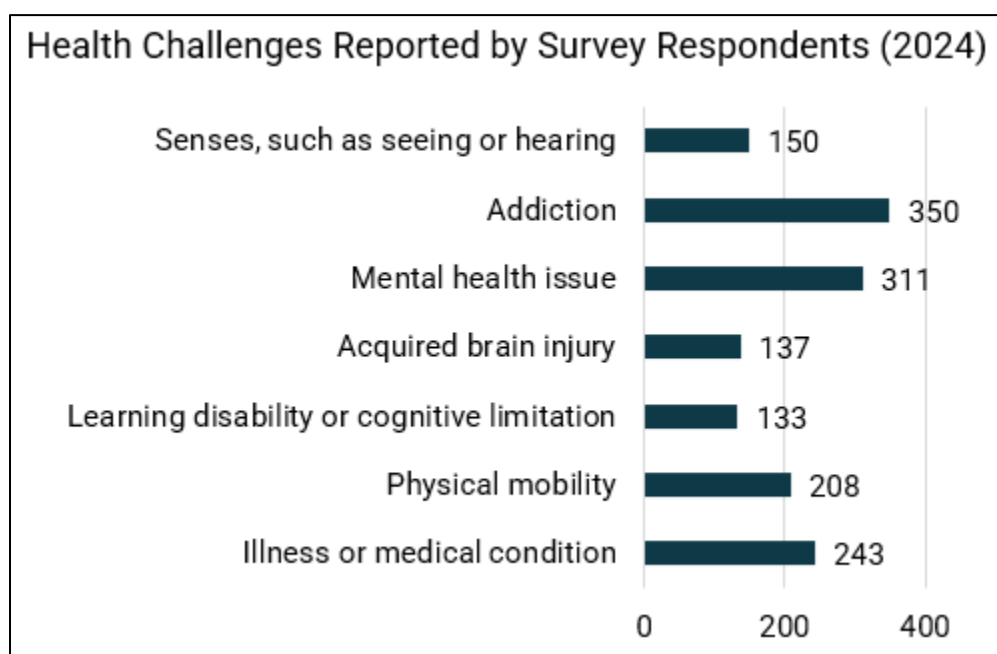


Substance use was reported by 58 respondents and mental health issues by 57, making these two of the most frequently cited causes of housing loss in the survey. Another 24 individuals identified physical health issues as a contributing factor. These figures mirror the 2023 results, where mental health and substance use were also among the top health-related drivers of homelessness.

The findings reaffirm the need for health and housing systems to be connected. Preventing health-related homelessness requires early intervention, integrated care, and long-term, low-barrier support for individuals navigating complex health conditions.

Health & Well-being

Health concerns continue to play a significant role in the lived experience of people experiencing homelessness in Nanaimo. Respondents were asked whether they identify as having specific health conditions at the time of the survey. The data reveals a striking prevalence of overlapping physical, cognitive, and mental health challenges among participants.



Mental health and substance use were the most commonly reported health concerns. A total of 350 individuals (approximately 74 percent of respondents) identified a substance use issue, while 311 (66 percent) reported experiencing a mental health issue. These categories were not mutually exclusive and often co-occurred with other challenges, reflecting the complexity of needs within the unhoused population.

Physical health challenges were also common. More than half of respondents reported a medical condition (243 individuals), while 208 indicated difficulties with mobility. Cognitive and neurological issues were present among a substantial subset of the population, with 137 reporting acquired brain injury and 133 identifying learning or cognitive disabilities. Additionally, 150 respondents experienced sensory disabilities affecting vision or hearing.

This data highlights the extent to which individuals experiencing homelessness are also navigating significant health-related barriers. It reinforces the need for wraparound services that include access to mental health care, substance use supports, physical rehabilitation, and accessible housing that accommodates mobility and sensory needs.

These findings are consistent with 2023 data, which also showed elevated rates of co-occurring health conditions among unhoused individuals. They continue to emphasize the interconnectedness of health and housing stability and the importance of health-informed housing strategies.

Sources of Income

The 2024 PiT Count data reveals that the majority of respondents relied on government income supports, with welfare or income assistance and disability benefits being the most commonly reported sources. These findings are consistent with 2023 results and continue to highlight the critical role of provincial assistance in sustaining individuals experiencing homelessness.

Informal employment, such as bottle collection, recycling, or panhandling, was also frequently reported, reflecting the limited availability of formal, stable work for people facing housing precarity. Very few respondents reported receiving income from part-time or full-time employment, underscoring persistent barriers to labour market access.

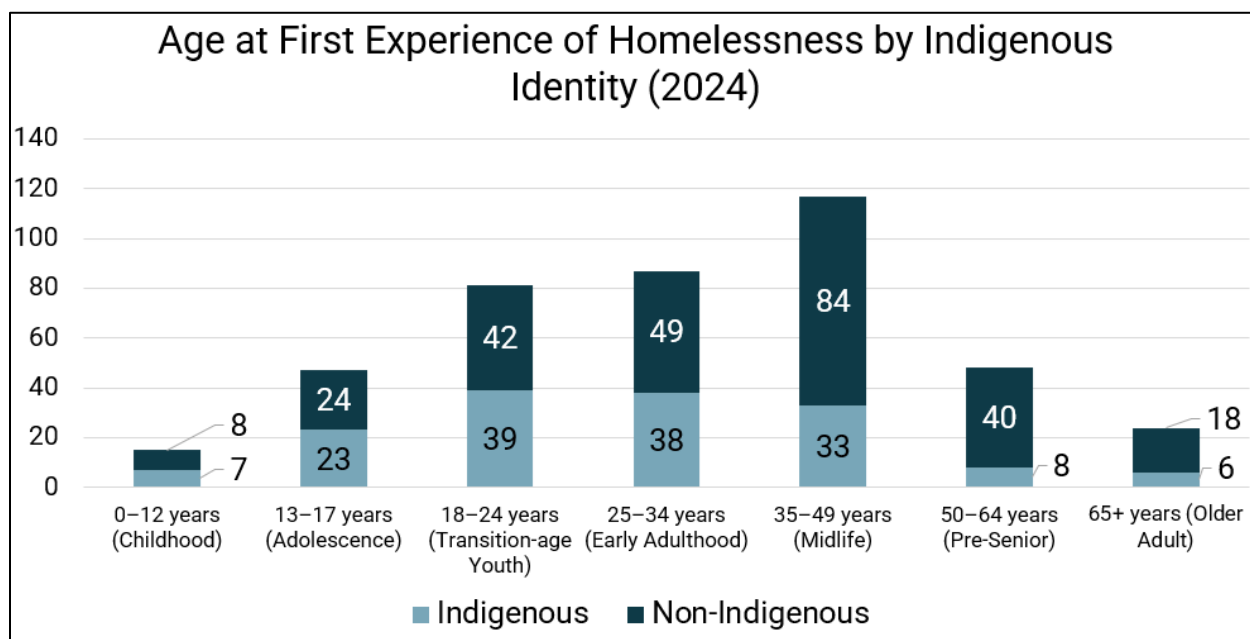
A small number of individuals indicated they had no income at all, while others relied on irregular sources such as gifts from family or service agencies. Pension and old age security were cited by some older respondents, but not in numbers sufficient to offset the broader trend of deep income insecurity.

Overall, the data reflects a pattern seen in previous counts: income supports, while essential, are often insufficient to lift individuals out of homelessness in a high-cost rental market like Nanaimo's. These findings emphasize the need for both income adequacy and access to low-barrier employment opportunities as part of a broader housing stability strategy.

Early Experiences of Homelessness: A Path to Long-Term Instability

Experiencing homelessness early in life can set a trajectory that is difficult to escape. The 2024 PiT Count survey asked respondents, "How old were you the first time you experienced homelessness?" The responses reveal that many individuals begin experiencing homelessness during their formative years, with significant representation in every age group under 35. This highlights the importance of early prevention and age-targeted supports.

The horizontal stacked bar chart below displays Indigenous and non-Indigenous respondent counts by age at first experience of homelessness:



To provide further detail, the table below includes the same data along with counts of those whose Indigenous identity or age-at-first-homelessness was unknown.

Age Group	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Unknown / No Answer	Total
0–12 years (Childhood)	7	8	2	17
13–17 years (Adolescence)	23	24	6	53
18–24 years (Transition-age)	39	42	4	85
25–34 years (Early Adulthood)	38	49	5	92
35–49 years (Midlife)	33	84	4	121
50–64 years (Pre-Senior)	8	40	4	52
65+ years (Older Adult)	6	18	7	31
Don't know / No answer	1	3	6	10
Total	155	268	38	461

The data shows that 155 respondents who identified as Indigenous reported their age at first homelessness, with many first experiencing homelessness as youth or young adults. A combined 69 Indigenous respondents (44 percent) became homeless before the age of 25. For non-Indigenous respondents, 74 individuals (28 percent) became homeless in that same age range. This indicates a disproportionate burden of early homelessness among Indigenous people, consistent with national trends.

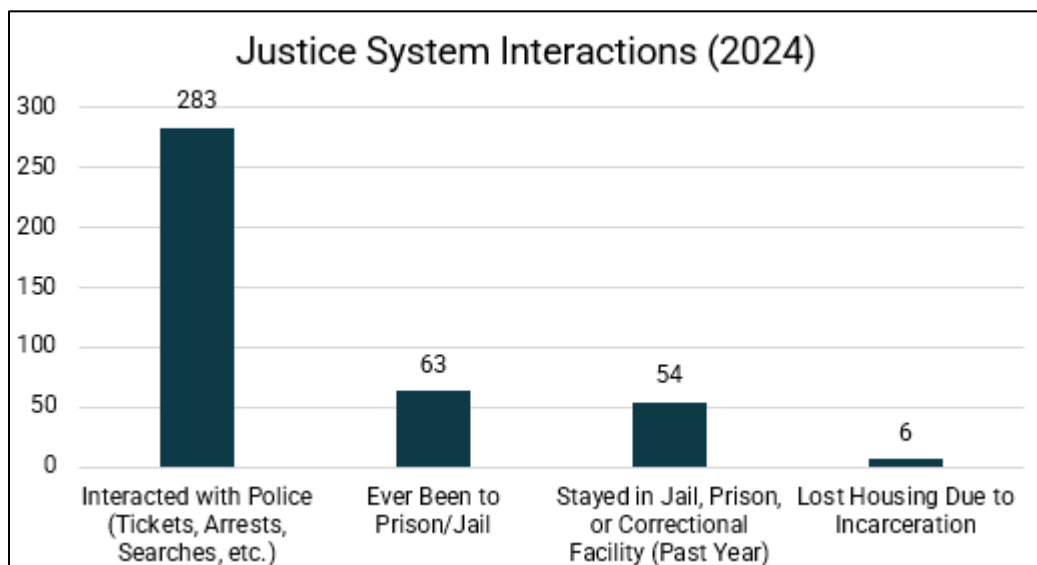
Early homelessness often reflects deep systemic issues including poverty, trauma, family separation, and lack of access to supports. For Indigenous individuals in particular, these patterns can stem from intergenerational impacts of colonial policies, including the child welfare system, Residential Schools, and the ongoing removal of children through the foster care system.

These early entries into homelessness are rarely short-lived. As shown in previous sections, most respondents had been homeless for more than six months in the past year, and many for much longer. Without early intervention and sustained support, young people who experience homelessness are at high risk of long-term instability, poor health outcomes, and repeated interactions with emergency and justice systems.

Addressing this challenge will require trauma-informed, culturally grounded youth housing strategies that recognize the unique experiences of Indigenous youth and the structural barriers they face in securing stable housing.

Interactions with Police & Justice System

The 2024 Nanaimo Point-in-Time Count reveals that justice system involvement is not a primary driver of homelessness. Of the 474 individuals surveyed, 63 (13 percent) reported having been incarcerated at some point, but only six said incarceration directly led to housing loss. In contrast, 283 people (61 percent) had at least one police interaction in the past year, highlighting how visible homelessness often results in frequent contact with law enforcement, even in the absence of criminal activity.



These findings reflect broader systemic challenges rather than individual wrongdoing. People experiencing homelessness often live in public spaces where their presence draws attention,

particularly in the absence of adequate housing, income supports, or healthcare. Rather than indicating higher criminality, this frequent police contact points to systemic barriers such as poverty, limited access to services, and discriminatory enforcement practices. Reports from the BC Office of the Human Rights Commissioner¹² and the "In Plain Sight"¹³ report have shown how marginalized individuals, particularly Indigenous people, are often subject to increased surveillance in public spaces.

Addressing these patterns requires a shift away from punitive responses toward health-based and community-led interventions. Programs that offer housing, mental health support, and culturally safe outreach can reduce unnecessary justice involvement. The data suggests that most individuals experiencing homelessness are not involved in the justice system and would benefit more from stability and support than from enforcement or criminalization.

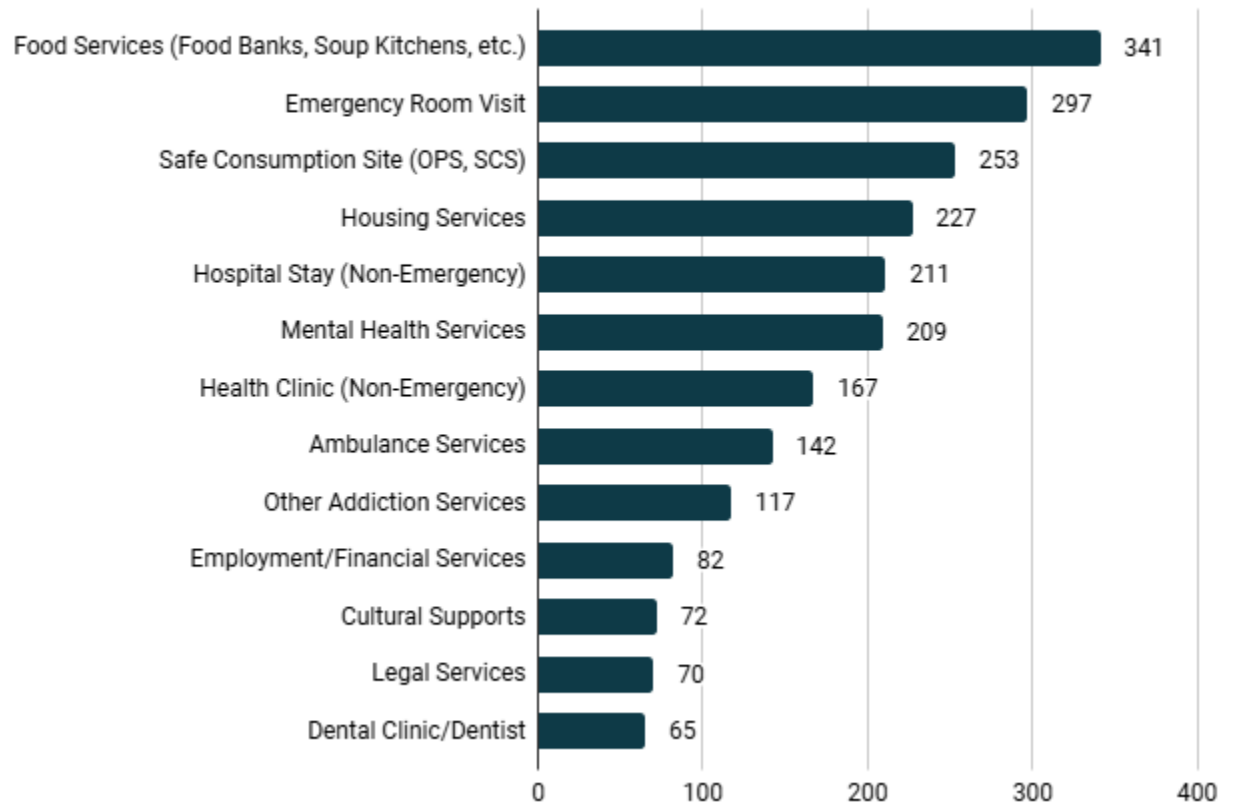
Service Utilization & Gaps

Access to services provides insight into both the availability of supports and the unmet needs within the community. The 2024 PiT Count data suggests that many individuals experiencing homelessness in Nanaimo are relying heavily on emergency and basic survival services, but far fewer are connecting with services that might support long-term housing stability or health recovery.

¹² BC Office of the Human Rights Commissioner. "Discrimination." <https://bchumanrights.ca/key-issues/discrimination/>

¹³ Turpel-Lafond, M.E. (2020). *In Plain Sight: Addressing Indigenous-specific Racism and Discrimination in B.C. Health Care*. <https://engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/613/2020/11/In-Plain-Sight-Summary-Report.pdf>

Services Accessed by Respondents in the Past 12 Months (2024)



Food services were the most accessed, with 341 individuals reporting the use of food banks or soup kitchens. This was followed by high utilization of emergency healthcare, with 297 reporting an emergency room visit and 253 reporting use of a safe consumption site. These findings align with broader trends observed in other communities: individuals without stable housing often turn to emergency responses over preventative or coordinated care.

In contrast, fewer respondents reported using employment or financial services (82), cultural supports (72), or legal services (70). Only 65 reported accessing dental services. These lower numbers point to significant service gaps in areas that are critical to long-term health and stability.

While 227 individuals reported accessing housing services, the continued rise in chronic homelessness suggests that available housing supports may not be sufficient to meet demand or that barriers to accessing permanent housing remain. These may include program waitlists, documentation requirements, or the absence of culturally appropriate and trauma-informed supports.

This pattern of high reliance on emergency and crisis supports, combined with lower engagement in stabilizing services, reflects a system that is currently geared toward reaction rather than prevention. Increasing investments in upstream services, particularly housing-first programming, wraparound supports, and Indigenous-led solutions, will be critical to shifting outcomes for people experiencing homelessness in Nanaimo.

While many respondents reported accessing short-term survival supports, such as emergency rooms, safe consumption sites, and food services, fewer were connected to the services that promote long-term housing and economic stability. For example, 227 individuals reported accessing housing services, yet the persistent housing crisis and lack of affordable, supportive units suggest these interventions are not sufficient to meet community need. Similarly, only 82 respondents accessed employment or financial services, reflecting broader barriers such as job discrimination, inadequate training, and the impact of untreated mental health conditions. Legal services and cultural supports were accessed by just 70 and 72 respondents respectively, despite their critical role in helping people assert tenant rights, navigate complex systems, and access Indigenous-led healing. These gaps point to a service system that remains fragmented and often inaccessible, leaving many without the necessary tools to move beyond crisis and toward long-term stability.

The 2024 PiT Count findings on service access align closely with those observed in 2023, highlighting persistent patterns in how individuals experiencing homelessness in Nanaimo engage with support systems. High reliance on emergency responses, such as food services, emergency rooms, and safe consumption sites, remains consistent. At the same time, fewer individuals report accessing stabilizing services like housing supports, employment assistance, cultural supports, or legal services. The consistency between years underscores that the broader systemic challenges remain unchanged. These results continue to point to a service system that is geared toward crisis management rather than long-term prevention and recovery.

Summary: Changes from 2023 to 2024

The 2024 Point-in-Time Count recorded 621 individuals experiencing homelessness in Nanaimo, reflecting a 20.6 percent increase from 515 individuals in 2023. This represents a return to the steep growth trends observed prior to the pandemic and underscores the ongoing failure of housing, health, and social systems to respond to the scale of need. While the rise in total numbers is significant, the data also reveals deepening inequities, particularly for Indigenous people and youth.

Indigenous individuals made up 34 percent of respondents in 2024, consistent with previous years, yet still far above their share of the general population. This persistent overrepresentation reflects the legacy of displacement, systemic racism, and the failure of colonial institutions to meet the housing and wellness needs of Indigenous peoples. From

Snuneymuxw's perspective, this data reaffirms what is already known: that without culturally grounded supports and Indigenous-led responses, the cycle of homelessness will continue.

Youth homelessness remains a major concern. Thirty-one percent of respondents reported becoming homeless before the age of 25. Among those with foster care involvement, the majority were Indigenous, reinforcing the long-standing connection between child welfare involvement and housing precarity. These patterns highlight the need for coordinated supports for youth aging out of care, with a focus on long-term housing, healing, and cultural connection.

Chronic homelessness also increased, with 85.6 percent of respondents indicating they had been homeless for six months or more in the past year. Service utilization remained high for emergency and crisis supports (such as food programs and emergency room visits) while access to stabilizing services like housing, employment, and legal aid remained comparatively low.

Together, these findings point to a system that is strained and insufficient, and to gaps that disproportionately affect Indigenous people. Snuneymuxw First Nation continues to lead with a vision rooted in cultural strength, care, and accountability. The data calls for renewed partnership, sustained investment, and an unwavering commitment to Indigenous-led solutions.

CONCLUSION

The 2024 Nanaimo Point-in-Time Count presents a clear picture of a community in crisis, but also one where the path forward is already being led. Snuneymuxw First Nation took a central role in this year's count: training volunteers, guiding outreach efforts, and ensuring that culturally safe engagement was embedded throughout the process. This leadership reflects the Nation's enduring responsibility as stewards of these lands and caretakers of all those who live here.

The findings of this report point to persistent and growing challenges. Homelessness is rising, particularly among Indigenous peoples and youth. Too many individuals are living without stability, safety, or access to the services they need. The systems that exist to respond, including health, housing, and child welfare, are stretched thin and are not reaching those who need them most. The data reinforces what Snuneymuxw and many in the community already know: that homelessness in this territory is rooted in colonization, systemic racism, and the erosion of culturally safe supports.

But this report also shows that solutions exist. Most respondents want permanent housing. They have named the supports they need: income, health care, safety, and a place to belong. Indigenous-led, trauma-informed approaches must be at the heart of this work. Snuneymuxw is already doing the work, and this report offers a foundation for stronger partnerships based on accountability, mutual respect, and shared purpose.

Caring for those in need is not a gesture; it is a responsibility. Snuneymuxw will continue to uphold this duty. But meaningful progress requires others to walk alongside. All levels of government, funders, and service providers must commit to Indigenous-led housing solutions, shift from crisis management to prevention, and ensure that everyone on these lands, whether housed or unhoused, has the opportunity to live with dignity.

Snuneymuxw is well positioned and committed to continuing this important work, guided by our teachings and our responsibilities to future generations. While homelessness is not unique to Nanaimo and similar challenges exist in communities across the province, Nanaimo can serve as a model for meaningful progress through the leadership and vision of Snuneymuxw First Nation.

APPENDIX A : Survey Questionnaire

UNSHeltered SURVEY

Survey Number: 0000

Location: _____

Time: _____ AM/PM

Interviewer: _____

Contact #: _____

A. Have you already answered this survey today or last night (with someone wearing a yellow button)?

- ☐ YES (END) ☐ NO (Go to B) ☐ DON'T KNOW (END) ☐ DECLINE TO ANSWER (END)

B. Are you willing to participate in the survey?

- ☐ YES (Go to C) ☐ NO (END)

INTERVIEWER: The definition of "rent" is a fixed amount of money the person pays to be allowed to stay there for 30 days +, and can expect to do so for the foreseeable future.

C. Do you currently have a place to stay where you pay monthly rent? [check one]

- ☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ DON'T KNOW ☐ DECLINE TO ANSWER

D. Where are you staying tonight? / Where did you stay last night?

a. DECLINE TO ANSWER b. OWN APARTMENT/HOUSE: SPECIFY _____ c. PARENT/GUARDIAN'S HOUSE (PERMANENT)	} [THANK & END SURVEY]
d. PARENT'S/GUARDIAN'S HOUSE (TEMPORARY) e. SOMEONE ELSE'S PLACE OR COUCHSURFING f. HOTEL/MOTEL WHERE YOU PAY TO STAY FOR <30 DAYS g. HOSPITAL: NAME _____ h. TREATMENT CENTRE : NAME _____ i. JAIL, PRISON, REMAND CENTRE : NAME _____ j. A CLIENT'S PLACE	
D1. Do you have access to a permanent residence where you can safely stay as long as you want? a. Yes [THANK & END SURVEY] b. No (not permanent AND/OR not safe) [Go to E] c. Don't Know [Go to E] d. Decline to answer [THANK & END SURVEY]	
k. HOMELESS SHELTER (e.g. emergency, family or domestic violence shelter) l. HOTEL/MOTEL PAID BY CITY OR HOMELESS PROGRAM m. TRANSITIONAL SHELTER/HOUSING: NAME _____ n. ENCAMPMENT (e.g. group of tents, makeshift shelters, or other long-term outdoor settlement) o. UNSHELTERED IN A PUBLIC SPACE (e.g. street, park, bus shelter, forest) p. ABANDONED/VACANT BUILDING q. VEHICLE (e.g. car, van, recreational vehicle (RV), truck, boat) r. UNSURE: INDICATE PROBABLE LOCATION _____ (b. - q.)	} [Go to E]

E. Did you feel safe there?

- ☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ DON'T KNOW ☐ DECLINE TO ANSWER

BEGIN SURVEY

1. Have you spent at least one night in any of the following locations in the past year? (check all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/> HOMELESS SHELTER (e.g. emergency, family or domestic violence shelter) <input type="checkbox"/> SECOND STAGE HOUSING (AFTER Transition House) <input type="checkbox"/> SECOND STAGE HOUSING (AFTER Addictions Treatment) <input type="checkbox"/> HOTEL/MOTEL FUNDED BY CITY OR HOMELESS PROGRAM <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSITIONAL SHELTER/HOUSING <input type="checkbox"/> UNSHELTERED IN A PUBLIC SPACE (e.g. street, park, bus shelter, forest, or abandoned building) <input type="checkbox"/> ENCAMPMENT (e.g. group of tents, makeshift shelters, or other long-term outdoor settlement)	<input type="checkbox"/> VEHICLE (e.g. car, van, recreational vehicle (RV), truck, boat) <input type="checkbox"/> SOMEONE ELSE'S PLACE BECAUSE YOU HAD NOWHERE ELSE TO GO <input type="checkbox"/> HOSPITAL OR OTHER HEALTH FACILITY <input type="checkbox"/> JAIL, PRISON, OR OTHER CORRECTIONAL FACILITY <input type="checkbox"/> NONE OF THE ABOVE (SPECIFY _____) <input type="checkbox"/> DON'T KNOW <input type="checkbox"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER
---	--

2. Do you have family members or anyone else who is staying with you tonight? / Did any family members or anyone else stay with you last night? (Indicate survey number for partners. Check all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/> NONE <input type="checkbox"/> PARTNER - Survey #: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> CHILD(REN)/DEPENDENT(S) [indicate age for each child/dependent]	<input type="checkbox"/> PET(S) <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER ADULT (Can include other family or friends)																
AGE	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <tr> <th>1</th><th>2</th><th>3</th><th>4</th><th>5</th><th>6</th><th>7</th><th>8</th></tr> <tr> <td style="height: 30px;"></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8								
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8										
<input type="checkbox"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER																	

3. How old are you? [OR] What year were you born? (If unsure, ask for best estimate)

<input type="radio"/> AGE _____ OR YEAR BORN _____	<input type="radio"/> DON'T KNOW	<input type="radio"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER
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➔ **For this survey, “homelessness” means any time when you have been without a permanent and secure place to live, and includes sleeping in shelters, on the streets, or living temporarily with others without having your own permanent housing (e.g. couch surfing).**

4. In total, for how much time have you experienced homelessness over the PAST YEAR (the last 12 months)? (Does not need to be exact. Best estimate.)

<input type="radio"/> LENGTH _____ DAYS WEEKS MONTHS	<input type="radio"/> DON'T KNOW	<input type="radio"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER
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4b. In total, for how much time have you experienced homelessness over the PAST 3 YEARS? (Does not need to be exact. Best estimate.)

<input type="radio"/> LESS THAN HALF	<input type="radio"/> ABOUT HALF OR MORE	<input type="radio"/> DON'T KNOW	<input type="radio"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER
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5. How old were you the first time you experienced homelessness?

<input type="radio"/> AGE _____	<input type="radio"/> DON'T KNOW	<input type="radio"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER
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6. Did you come to Canada as an immigrant, refugee, asylum claimant (i.e. applied for refugee status after coming to Canada), or through another process?

<input type="radio"/> YES, IMMIGRANT -----> <input type="radio"/> YES, REFUGEE -----> <input type="radio"/> YES, ASYLUM CLAIMANT IN CANADA -----> <input type="radio"/> YES, TEMPORARY FOREIGN WORKER -----> <input type="radio"/> YES, OTHER WORK PERMIT -----> <input type="radio"/> YES, STUDY PERMIT -----> <input type="radio"/> YES, TEMPORARY RESIDENT -----> <input type="radio"/> YES, OTHER (including undocumented) ----->	If YES: 	How long have you been in Canada? <input type="radio"/> LENGTH: _____ DAYS WEEKS MONTHS YEARS OR DATE: ____/____/____ DAY / MONTH / YEAR <input type="radio"/> DON'T KNOW <input type="radio"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER
<input type="radio"/> NO	<input type="radio"/> DON'T KNOW	<input type="radio"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER

7. How long have you been in (community name)?

<input type="radio"/> LENGTH ____ DAYS / WEEKS / MONTHS / YEARS <input type="radio"/> ALWAYS BEEN HERE <input type="radio"/> DON'T KNOW <input type="radio"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER	<input type="radio"/> WHERE did you live before you came here? CITY: _____ PROVINCE/TERRITORY/COUNTRY: _____ <input type="radio"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER
--	---

8. Do you identify as First Nations (with or without status), Métis, or Inuit, or do you have other North American Indigenous ancestry? (if yes, check all that apply)

<input type="radio"/> FIRST NATIONS, Specify: _____	<input type="radio"/> INUIT <input type="radio"/> MÉTIS	<input type="radio"/> INDIGENOUS ANCESTRY <input type="radio"/> NO	<input type="radio"/> DON'T KNOW <input type="radio"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER
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8b. In addition to your response in the question above, do you identify with any of the racial identities listed below? (Show or Read list. Select all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/> IDENTIFY AS INDIGENOUS ONLY <input type="checkbox"/> ARAB (e.g., Syrian, Egyptian, Yemeni) <input type="checkbox"/> ASIAN-EAST (e.g., Chinese, Korean, Japanese) <input type="checkbox"/> ASIAN- SOUTH-EAST (e.g., Filipino, Vietnamese, Cambodian, Malaysian, Laotian) <input type="checkbox"/> ASIAN-SOUTH OR INDO-CARIBBEAN (e.g., Indian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan, Indo-Guyanese, Indo-Trinidadian) <input type="checkbox"/> ASIAN-WEST (e.g., Iranian, Afghan) <input type="checkbox"/> BLACK-CANADIAN/AMERICAN	<input type="checkbox"/> BLACK-AFRICAN (e.g., Ghanaian, Ethiopian, Nigerian) <input type="checkbox"/> BLACK-AFRO-CARIBBEAN OR AFRO-LATINX (e.g., Jamaican, Haitian, Afro-Brazilian.) <input type="checkbox"/> LATIN AMERICAN (e.g., Brazilian, Mexican, Chilean, Cuban) <input type="checkbox"/> WHITE (e.g. European, French, Ukrainian, Euro-Latinx) <input type="checkbox"/> NOT LISTED (PLEASE SPECIFY): _____ <input type="checkbox"/> DON'T KNOW <input type="checkbox"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER
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9. Have you ever served in the Canadian Military or RCMP? (Military includes Canadian Navy, Army, and Air Force, Regular and Reserve, Army Rangers including completing basic training)

<input type="radio"/> YES, MILITARY <input type="radio"/> YES, RCMP	<input type="radio"/> BOTH MILITARY AND RCMP <input type="radio"/> NO	<input type="radio"/> DON'T KNOW <input type="radio"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER
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10. As a child or youth, were you ever in foster care, in a youth group home, or on an Independent Living Agreement? (Note: This question applies specifically to child welfare programs.)

<input type="radio"/> YES	<input type="radio"/> NO	<input type="radio"/> DON'T KNOW	<input type="radio"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER
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INTERVIEWER: The following question is sensitive and can be prefaced by asking for consent ("can I ask you a question about residential school?")

11. Did you, your parents, or grandparents ever attend Indian residential school? (if yes, check all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/> YES, I DID	<input type="checkbox"/> YES, ONE OR MORE GRANDPARENTS DID	<input type="checkbox"/> DON'T KNOW
<input type="checkbox"/> YES, ONE OR MORE PARENTS DID	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER

12. Have you been experiencing challenges related to any of the following?:

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW	DECLINE TO ANSWER
ILLNESS OR MEDICAL CONDITION (e.g. diabetes, tuberculosis (TB) or human immunodeficiency virus (HIV))	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
PHYSICAL MOBILITY (e.g. spinal cord injury, arthritis, or limited movement or dexterity)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
LEARNING, INTELLECTUAL/DEVELOPMENTAL, OR COGNITIVE FUNCTION (e.g. fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD), autism, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), dyslexia or dementia)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
ACQUIRED BRAIN INJURY (e.g. due to an accident, violence, overdose, stroke, or brain tumour)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
MENTAL HEALTH [diagnosed/undiagnosed] (e.g. depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), bipolar, or schizophrenia)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
SUBSTANCE USE (e.g. alcohol or opiates)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
SENSES, SUCH AS SEEING OR HEARING (e.g. blindness or deafness)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

13. What gender do you identify with? (Show list or read list and check one.)

<input type="radio"/> MAN	<input type="radio"/> NON-BINARY	<input type="radio"/> DON'T KNOW
<input type="radio"/> WOMAN	<input type="radio"/> AGENDER	<input type="radio"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER
<input type="radio"/> TWO-SPIRIT	<input type="radio"/> NOT LISTED: _____	

14. Do you identify as someone with a trans experience (your gender identity is different than was assigned at birth)?

<input type="radio"/> YES	<input type="radio"/> NO	<input type="radio"/> DON'T KNOW	<input type="radio"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER
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15. How do you describe your sexual orientation, for example straight, gay, lesbian? (Show list or read list.)

<input type="radio"/> STRAIGHT/HETEROSEXUAL	<input type="radio"/> BISEXUAL	<input type="radio"/> ASEXUAL	<input type="radio"/> NOT LISTED: _____
<input type="radio"/> GAY	<input type="radio"/> TWO-SPIRIT	<input type="radio"/> QUEER	<input type="radio"/> DON'T KNOW
<input type="radio"/> LESBIAN	<input type="radio"/> PANSEXUAL	<input type="radio"/> QUESTIONING	<input type="radio"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER

16. What happened that caused you to lose your housing most recently? (Do not read the options.

Check all that apply. "Housing" does not include temporary arrangements (e.g., couch surfing) or shelter stays. Follow up for the reason if the respondent says "eviction" or that they "chose to leave".)

HOUSING AND FINANCIAL ISSUES <input type="checkbox"/> NOT ENOUGH INCOME FOR HOUSING (e.g. loss of income, increased rent)	CONFLICT WITH: <input type="checkbox"/> SPOUSE/PARTNER	EXPERIENCED DISCRIMINATION BY: <input type="checkbox"/> SPOUSE/PARTNER <input type="checkbox"/> PARENT/GUARDIAN <input type="checkbox"/> LANDLORD
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<input type="checkbox"/> EXPIRED RENTAL SUPPLEMENT (e.g. HPP, HOP) <input type="checkbox"/> GUEST POLICY <input type="checkbox"/> UNFIT/UNSAFE HOUSING CONDITION <input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING SOLD OR RENOVATED <input type="checkbox"/> OWNER MOVED IN	<input type="checkbox"/> PARENT/GUARDIAN/CAREGIVER <input type="checkbox"/> LANDLORD <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (_____)	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (_____)
OTHER <input type="checkbox"/> COMPLAINT (e.g. pets/noise/damage) <input type="checkbox"/> LEFT THE COMMUNITY/RELOCATED <input type="checkbox"/> DEATH OR DEPARTURE OF FAMILY MEMBER <input type="checkbox"/> PET(S) <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER REASON Specify: _____ _____ _____	EXPERIENCED ABUSE BY: <input type="checkbox"/> SPOUSE/PARTNER <input type="checkbox"/> PARENT/GUARDIAN/CAREGIVER <input type="checkbox"/> CHILD/DEPENDANT <input type="checkbox"/> LANDLORD <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (_____)	HEALTH OR CORRECTIONS <input type="checkbox"/> PHYSICAL HEALTH ISSUE/DISABILITY <input type="checkbox"/> MENTAL HEALTH ISSUE <input type="checkbox"/> SUBSTANCE USE ISSUE <input type="checkbox"/> HOSPITALIZATION OR TREATMENT PROGRAM <input type="checkbox"/> INCARCERATION (jail or prison) <input type="checkbox"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER
	<input type="checkbox"/> DON'T KNOW	

16b. How long ago did that happen (that you lost your housing most recently)? (Best estimate)

<input type="radio"/> LENGTH _____ DAYS WEEKS MONTHS YEARS	<input type="radio"/> DON'T KNOW	<input type="radio"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER
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16c. Was your most recent housing loss related to an eviction?

<input type="radio"/> YES	<input type="radio"/> NO	<input type="radio"/> DON'T KNOW	<input type="radio"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER
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17. What are your sources of income? (Reminder that this survey is anonymous. **Read list** and check all that apply)

Formal or Informal Work	Benefits	Other
<input type="checkbox"/> FULL TIME EMPLOYMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE	<input type="checkbox"/> YOUTH AGREEMENT
<input type="checkbox"/> PART TIME EMPLOYMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DISABILITY BENEFIT (e.g. PWD, PPMB)	<input type="checkbox"/> MONEY FROM FAMILY/FRIENDS
<input type="checkbox"/> CASUAL EMPLOYMENT (e.g. contract work)	<input type="checkbox"/> OLD AGE SECURITY (OAS) / GUARANTEED INCOME SUPPLEMENT (GIS)	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER MONEY FROM A SERVICE AGENCY
<input type="checkbox"/> HONORARIA	<input type="checkbox"/> CPP OR OTHER PENSION	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> INFORMAL INCOME SOURCES (e.g. bottle returns, panhandling)	<input type="checkbox"/> WELFARE/INCOME ASSISTANCE	<input type="checkbox"/> NO INCOME
<input type="checkbox"/> SEX WORK	<input type="checkbox"/> VETERAN/VAC BENEFITS	<input type="checkbox"/> DON'T KNOW
	<input type="checkbox"/> CHILD AND FAMILY BENEFITS	<input type="checkbox"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER
	<input type="checkbox"/> GST/HST REFUND	

18. What services have you used in the past 12 months? (Read list and check all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/> CULTURAL SUPPORTS	<input type="checkbox"/> SAFE CONSUMPTION SITE (e.g. OPS)	<input type="checkbox"/> HOUSING SERVICES
<input type="checkbox"/> AMBULANCE	<input type="checkbox"/> (OTHER) ADDICTIONS SERVICES	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER SERVICES: Specify _____
<input type="checkbox"/> EMERGENCY ROOM	<input type="checkbox"/> HEALTH CLINIC	
<input type="checkbox"/> HOSPITAL (NON-EMERGENCY)	<input type="checkbox"/> FOOD SERVICES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO SERVICES IN LAST 12 MONTHS
<input type="checkbox"/> DENTAL CLINIC/DENTIST	<input type="checkbox"/> LEGAL SERVICES	<input type="checkbox"/> DON'T KNOW
<input type="checkbox"/> MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES	<input type="checkbox"/> EMPLOYMENT/FINANCIAL SERVICES	<input type="checkbox"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER

19. Do you prefer to access services in English, French, or another language?

<input type="radio"/> ENGLISH	<input type="radio"/> OTHER, Specify: _____	<input type="radio"/> DON'T KNOW
<input type="radio"/> FRENCH		<input type="radio"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER

2023 OPTIONAL QUESTIONS INCLUDED: PRE-DETERMINED BY REACHING HOME:

CO17b. In the past year (12 months) have you: [Ask respondents to give their best estimate]

BEEN TO AN EMERGENCY ROOM	Y ____ N ____	# ____	Times
BEEN HOSPITALIZED	Y ____ N ____	# ____	Times
→DAYS YOU HAVE SPENT HOSPITALIZED		____	Days Total
INTERACTED WITH POLICE (<i>Tickets, arrests, searches</i>)	Y ____ N ____	# ____	Times
BEEN TO PRISON/JAIL	Y ____ N ____	# ____	Times
→DAYS YOU HAVE SPENT IN PRISON/JAIL		____	Days Total

CO18b. Do you want to get into permanent housing?

<input type="radio"/> YES	<input type="radio"/> NO	<input type="radio"/> DON'T KNOW	<input type="radio"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER
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CO19b. What challenges or problems have you experienced when trying to find housing? [Select all that apply]

<input type="checkbox"/> LOW INCOME	<input type="checkbox"/> MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES	<input type="checkbox"/> DISCRIMINATION
<input type="checkbox"/> NO INCOME ASSISTANCE	<input type="checkbox"/> ADDICTION	<input type="checkbox"/> DON'T WANT HOUSING
<input type="checkbox"/> RENTS TOO HIGH	<input type="checkbox"/> FAMILY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> POOR HOUSING CONDITIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> BREAKDOWN/CONFLICT	<input type="checkbox"/> NO BARRIERS TO HOUSING
<input type="checkbox"/> DOMESTIC VIOLENCE	<input type="checkbox"/> CRIMINAL HISTORY	<input type="checkbox"/> NONE OF THE ABOVE
<input type="checkbox"/> HEALTH/DISABILITY ISSUES	<input type="checkbox"/> PETS	<input type="checkbox"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER
	<input type="checkbox"/> CHILDREN	

CO20b. I'm going to read a list of services that you may or may not need. Let me know which of these apply to you. Do you have a need for services related to: [Read categories, select all that apply]

<input type="checkbox"/> SERIOUS/ONGOING MEDICAL CONDITION	<input type="checkbox"/> PHYSICAL DISABILITY	<input type="checkbox"/> PREGNANCY
<input type="checkbox"/> ADDICTION OR SUBSTANCE USE	<input type="checkbox"/> LEARNING DISABILITY	<input type="checkbox"/> NONE OF THE ABOVE
<input type="checkbox"/> MENTAL HEALTH (<i>Counselling, treatment, etc.</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/> BRAIN INJURY	<input type="checkbox"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER

CO21b. What are some of the ways we can solve homelessness? (Do not read list. Check all that are mentioned).

<input type="checkbox"/> AFFORDABLE HOUSING	<input type="checkbox"/> EMPLOYMENT SUPPORTS
<input type="checkbox"/> INCREASE INCOME ASSISTANCE	<input type="checkbox"/> INCREASE # OUTREACH WORKERS
<input type="checkbox"/> INCREASE ADDICTIONS SUPPORT	<input type="checkbox"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER
<input type="checkbox"/> HOUSING FOR COUPLES	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER _____
<input type="checkbox"/> MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTS	

This Report was prepared on behalf of United Way BC and Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy by Snuneymuxw First Nation in partnership with Nanaimo Systems Planning Organization (SPO).

Our hands are raised in gratitude to the many individuals and organizations—including the City of Nanaimo, community partners, outreach workers, volunteers, and everyone who generously contributed their time, knowledge, and spirit to this important work.

