

# 2025 State of Homelessness Report



## Division of Human Services

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**Date:** March 2026

## Partner Appreciation

Addressing homelessness requires a coordinated and compassionate effort from our entire community. Through collaboration, dedication and shared commitment we can make a lasting impact in the lives of our unhoused neighbors.



We extend our sincere gratitude to our community partners for their invaluable contributions. Your hard work, advocacy and unwavering support play a crucial role in providing essential resources, shelter and pathways for those in need.

Together, we are making a difference. Thank you for your continued partnership and dedication to building more inclusive community for all.

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## What is Homelessness?

Homelessness is categorized into four groups by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). These categories are used to help identify people who need assistance and to develop programs to their needs.

### Category 1: Literally Homeless

- **An individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence, meaning:**
  - Has a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not meant for human habitation; or
  - Is living in a publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (including congregate shelters, transitional housing and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or by federal, state and local government programs); or
  - Is exiting an institution where (s)he has resided for 90 days or less and who resided in an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately before entering that institution.



### Category 2: Imminent Risk of Homelessness

- **An individual or family who will imminently lose their primary nighttime residence, meaning:**
  - Residence will be lost within 14 days of the date of application for homeless assistance;
  - No subsequent residence has been identified; and
  - The individual or family lacks the resources or support networks needed to obtain other permanent housing.
    - **Note:** *Category 2 includes individuals and families who are within 14 days of losing their housing, including housing they own, rent, are sharing with others or are living in without paying rent.*

### Category 3: Homeless Under Other Federal Statutes

- **Unaccompanied youth under 25 years of age or families with Category 3 children and youth, who do not otherwise qualify as homeless under this definition, but who:**
  - Are defined as homeless under the other listed federal statutes;
  - Have not had a lease or ownership interest in permanent housing during the 60 days prior to the homeless assistance application;
  - Have experienced persistent instability as measured by two moves or more during in the preceding 60 days; and

- Can be expected to continue in such a status for an extended period of time due to special needs or barriers.

#### Category 4: Fleeing/Attempting to Flee Domestic Violence

- Any individual or family who:
  - Is fleeing or is attempting to flee domestic violence;
  - Has no other residence; and
  - Lacks the resources or support networks to obtain other permanent housing.
    - **Note:** “Domestic violence” includes dating violence, sexual assault, stalking and other dangerous or life-threatening situations that relate to violence against the individual or family member that either takes place in, or causes them fear to return to, their primary nighttime residence (including human trafficking).
- [The National Alliance to End Homelessness also has commonly used definitions of homelessness. See their State of Homelessness: 2025 Edition report.](#)

## Why Might Someone Experience Homelessness?

Homelessness arises from a combination of individual, structural and systemic factors. These can include:

- Institutionalization (i.e. foster care system)
- Poverty
- Lack of affordable housing
- Mental illness and substance use disorders
- Lengthy and complicated processes to obtain social security and/or disability
- High rental rates
- Natural disasters
- Domestic violence
- Incarceration
- Lack of access to affordable health care, mental health care and medicine
- Disabilities

## Boone County and the City of Columbia Housing Study, 2024

A significant driver in rising housing prices and access to affordable housing is corporate investor activity. In buying up and renting properties that were previously owner-occupied. Investors are responsible for a little of residential real estate transactions today, compared to only 12% of transactions in 2002.

- [Investors are responsible for a little over 25% of residential real estate transactions today, compared to only 12% of transactions in 2002. \(Boston, and Amarch Planning Services, 2024, p. 57\). For more information, view the archived 2024 Boone County and the City of Columbia Housing Study.](#)

## System Tools Overview

- **Point-in-Time Count:** An annual snapshot of how many people are experiencing homelessness in our community. The data helps guide funding, planning and system improvement.
- **Outreach and Assessment:** Outreach teams connect with individuals and complete a housing assessment to understand needs, barriers and eligibility for housing resources within our region. This assessment is called the Vulnerability Index-Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool or VI-SPDAT.

- **Prioritization List:** Households who complete an assessment are placed on a community-wide prioritization list. Housing opportunities are offered based on vulnerability, chronic status and eligibility.
- **Coordinated Entry:** A shared, community-wide process that matches eligible households to available housing programs. Partners review the Prioritization List and make referrals based on vulnerability, chronic status, eligibility, and program fit to ensure housing resources are distributed fairly and consistently. Those most vulnerable are provided the most current resources available.
- **Voucher:** When a housing resource becomes available, an eligible household is offered a voucher or placement. Vouchers help cover the cost of rent and may include supportive services, allowing individuals and families to secure and maintain stable housing.

## Tools for Understanding and Addressing Homelessness

### Point in Time Count (PITC)

The PITC is an annual census survey conducted by shelters and volunteers across the country. It is a count of a community's homeless population.

#### What does the Point in Time Count include?

The PITC consists of a sheltered and unsheltered count.

- **The sheltered count includes individuals staying** in emergency shelters, safe haven projects, and transitional housing.
- **The unsheltered count includes individuals staying** on the streets, in their car, or in any place not meant for habitation.

#### Why is it important?

- Informs Congress about the extent of homelessness
- Helps communities plan services and programs
- Provides data over time to track progress
- Directly linked to funding allocations for homelessness programs

#### Strengths and Limitations

- **Strengths:** Captures unsheltered individuals who may not participate in local social services, provides a standard for comparison to other states or Continuum of Care Programs (CoCs), and includes both sheltered and unsheltered individuals.
- **Limitations:** Data reflects only one day, making it a snapshot; methodologies for unsheltered surveys vary, affecting consistency; and it does not account for individuals couch-surfing or temporarily staying with others.

### Prioritization List

**The Prioritization List is a community-level tool to track and address homelessness. specific data is updated regularly to provide more actionable information on homele**

#### How is it used?

The Homeless Management Information System is used to add people experiencing hc to the Prioritization List. People experiencing **chronic homelessness** have been homeless period of 12 months or have experienced four episodes of homelessness in two years. the top of the list and are eligible for the limited resources available first.

People experiencing **non-chronic homelessness** do not fit into the definition of chronic homelessness. While they face fewer barriers and have access to fewer housing resources through our system, they may find housing through support networks such as family, friends or community resources—or, in some cases, without any assistance.

The Boone County Coalition to End Homelessness (BCCEH) manages the list and facilitates bi-monthly conferencing with agencies and organizations. During these sessions, the list is reviewed name by name to determine next steps for securing housing for individuals and/or families following a housing-first approach. *The “housing-first approach” prioritizes providing housing without requiring specific conditions like sobriety or treatment, believing that stable housing is the foundation for addressing other challenges and improving lives.*

### What is the “housing-first approach?”

**Answer:** Prioritizing providing housing without requiring specific conditions like sobriety or treatment, believing that stable housing is the foundation for addressing other challenges and improving lives (NAEH, 2022).

### Coordinated Entry

A process that standardizes the way individuals and families at risk of homelessness or experiencing homelessness are assessed for and referred to the housing and services that they need for housing stability.

#### How does it work?

Coordinated Entry is a community-wide system that creates a single, shared way for people experiencing homelessness to access housing support. Through coordinated outreach, standardized assessments and a shared prioritization list, the system helps ensure that people with the most urgent needs are identified, tracked and matched to available housing resources as they become available. This process allows multiple agencies to work from the same information, reduce duplication and make consistent, transparent housing decisions across the community.

Coordinated Entry is not a housing program itself. It is a system-level process designed to equitably manage housing resources by prioritizing households with the highest needs and the longest histories of homelessness.

#### Through Coordinated Entry, households are:

- Assessed using standardized tools
- Placed on a shared prioritization list (more info about the prioritization list below)
- Reviewed through bi-weekly case-conferencing
- Referred to housing resources as vouchers become available.

**Coordinated Entry relies on over 30 different local organizations coming together to find the best placements for people experiencing homelessness.**

## Resources Available for Addressing Homelessness

### Vouchers

**Housing vouchers are the primary tool for moving people from homelessness into permanent housing. They include rental assistance, often paired with supportive services, and vary by population served, duration and funding.**

#### Types of Vouchers:

- **Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV):**
  - Long-term rental assistance available to eligible households. These vouchers represent the largest share of available assistance locally but are limited by funding, turnover and landlord participation.
- **Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH):**

- Long-term housing paired with supportive services, prioritized for individuals and families experiencing chronic homelessness and disabling conditions.
- **Rapid Re-Housing (RRH):**
  - Short- to medium-term rental assistance designed to help households quickly exit homelessness and stabilize in permanent housing.
- **Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Housing Assistance:**
  - Short-term housing support and prevention assistance used to reduce time spent in shelter or prevent homelessness.
- **Youth Homeless Demonstration Program (YHDP):**
  - Targeted housing assistance and services for youth and young adults experiencing homelessness, with limited eligibility and capacity.

While these vouchers are essential tools for addressing homelessness, their limited availability means they cannot meet the current level of need, requiring prioritization through Coordinated Entry.

## Homelessness Data in Figures

### The Cost of Housing

- **One Bedroom – Fair Market Rent, 2025**
  - \$861 per month—\$28.70 per day (National Low-Income Housing Coalition, 2025)
- **Extended Stay Motel**
  - \$49.50 per day (Red Roof Inn, n.d.)
- **Boone County Jail**
  - \$76-\$82 per day (Boone County, 2026)
- **Overnight Shelter (Room at the Inn)**
  - \$40.55 per night (City of Columbia, 2023)
- **Permanent Supportive Housing Voucher**
  - \$13.76 per day (Columbia/Boone County Public Health and Human Services & Columbia Housing Authority, 2026)

When comparing local daily costs, permanent housing stabilization through permanent supportive housing expensive than emergency shelters, motel placements or incarceration.

Although each system plays a role, the data highlight that long-term housing solutions reduce pressure on crisis systems and support both fiscal sustainability and community stability.

## Figure 1: Homelessness Rates per 10,000 Population (United States, Missouri, Boone County)

Year	United States	Missouri	Boone County
2014	18.10	12.00	12.10
2015	17.50	10.70	13.90
2016	17.00	10.10	12.40
2017	17.00	9.90	12.40
2018	16.80	9.60	15.70
2019	17.20	10.10	14.80
2020	17.50	10.60	12.90
2022 *	17.40	9.70	17.90
2023	19.40	10.80	14.20
2024	22.70	11.70	16.80

\*Note: Data for the year 2021 was omitted in the source report.



From 2014 through 2024, the rate of homelessness in Boone County remained consistently higher than the average but lower than the national average. There was a notable peak in 2022; however, more recent data return to the historical pattern. In 2023 and 2024, Boone County’s rate remained above Missouri’s but below national rate, even as the United States experienced a sharp overall increase in homelessness (Boone County to End Homelessness [BCCEH], n.d.; National Alliance to End Homelessness [NAEH], n.d.).

## Figure 2: 2024 Homelessness Rate per 10,000 in Missouri

Homelessness Rate per 10,000 Individuals by Geographical Area	
Geographical Area	Rate (Per 10,000 Individuals)
Boone County	17
Saint Charles Area*	11
Springfield Area*	14
Joplin Area*	16
St. Joseph Area*	24

\*Note: Asterisk indicates regions defined by Continuum of Care (CoC) boundaries rather than strict county lines.



In 2024, Boone County’s homelessness rate was 17 per 10,000 individuals, higher than the Springfield and Joplin areas and slightly above Joplin, though lower than the St. Joseph area (National Alliance to End Homelessness).

- **St. Charles Area:** St. Charles, Lincoln and Warren counties
- **Springfield Area:** Springfield, Greene, Christian and Webster counties
- **Joplin Area:** Joplin, Jasper and Newton counties
- **St. Joseph Area:** St. Joseph, Andrew, Buchanan and DeKalb counties

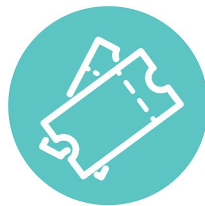
### Public Assistance IDs

Under Missouri statute, participating agencies may issue a Public Assistance ID, at no cost to the system, to individuals without identification. The ID is accepted by the local health department to obtain certified birth records.

death records, which typically require a fee. Fee waivers are available for domestic violence survivors and youth age 18 or younger.

### Figure 3: Housing Voucher Usage

Throughout 2025, housing voucher usage remained high, reflecting significant community engagement and support. Because vouchers are distributed at different times by multiple organizations, monthly totals vary and do not reflect changes in demand. These data highlight the community’s consistent reliance on this vital resource.



There were an average of about 14 open housing vouchers in Boone County in 2025. Many people experience difficulty finding housing, and vouchers are highly utilized by the community.



Multiple community partners apply for housing assistance funding annually, supporting services like case management and rental assistance availability.

\*Source: Boone County Coalition to End Homelessness (Boone County, MO), 2024; U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Decennial Census.

### Figure 4: People Experiencing Homelessness vs. Shelter Bed Capacity, Boone County, MO-2025

Comparison of Homelessness Demands vs. Shelter Bed Capacity			
Year	People Experiencing Homelessness	County Shelter Bed Capacity	Net Difference (Bed Margin)
2019	268	267	-1
2023	270	298	+28
2024	323	293	-30
2025	309	298	-11

Shelter bed capacity within Boone County has remained relatively stable across the years shown, increasing from 267 beds in 2019 to 298 beds in 2025 (Boone County Coalition to End Homelessness, n.d.). The number of individuals experiencing homelessness has consistently met or exceeded available bed capacity since 2024, with 309 individuals and 298 beds, demonstrating that the need exceeds capacity. This pattern mirrors state and national trends (Empower Missouri, n.d.).

## Figure 5

Households housed in one year (December 2024 through December 2025)\*

100% of available vouchers are currently being utilized

HUD defines someone as housed when they have secured permanent housing that meets basic safety and habitability standards

## Figure 6: Individuals on the Priority List by Month, Boone County, MO

Monthly Individuals on the Housing Priority List (Dec 2024 – Dec 2025)	
Month And Year	Number Of Individuals On PL
Dec 2024	338
Jan 2025	304
Feb 2025	274
Mar 2025	234
April 2025	214
May 2025	252
June 2025	213
July 2025	247
Aug 2025	242
Sept 2025	254
Oct 2025	261
Nov 2025	290

Month And Year	Number Of Individuals On PL
Dec 2025	265

From December 2024 through December 2025, the number of individuals on the Boone County Prioritization List ranged from a high of 338 to a low of 213 (Boone County Coalition to End Homelessness, n.d.).

The list declined consistently during the first half of the year, dropping 125 individuals between December 2024 and May 2025. Numbers stabilized briefly in May and June before increasing through the second half of the year, peaking at 290 in November 2025. December 2025 closed at 265, representing a net decrease of 73 individuals compared to December 2024. The number of individuals includes all household members.

While a cumulative prioritization list is not maintained, this net decrease occurred against a national backdrop where homelessness reached a record high in 2024, increasing 18% over the prior year across nearly all demographic and geographic areas (National Alliance to End Homelessness, 2025b).

\*Source: (Boone County Coalition to End Homelessness [BCCEH], n.d.; National Alliance to End Homelessness, 2025b)

## Figure 7: Family Households vs. Single-Person Households on Prioritization List, Boone County, MO

Household Types on Prioritization List, Boone County (Dec 2024 - Dec 2025)		
Month And Year	Individual Households	Family Households
Dec 2024	171	53
Jan 2025	148	44
Feb 2025	146	35
Mar 2025	143	28
April 2025	135	26

Month And Year	Individual Households	Family Households
May 2025	135	26
June 2025	126	23
July 2025	141	31
Aug 2025	137	30
Sep 2025	134	34
Oct 2025	127	40
Nov 2025	123	46
Dec 2025	120	40

From December 2024 through December 2025, single-person households consistently outnumbered family households on the Boone County Prioritization List (Boone County Coalition to End Homelessness, n.d.). Individual households declined on the prioritization list from 171 in December 2024 to 120 in December 2025.

In contrast, family households decreased through the spring, reaching a low of 23 in June, before rising steadily through the fall and peaking at 46 in November. While single adults continue to represent the majority of households on the list, the upward trend in family households during the latter half of 2025.

## Figures 8 and 9

Active households on the prioritization list each month between December 2024 and December 2025.

Average number of individuals/families housed each month through Coordinated Entry or resolving on their own, and removed from the Prioritization List (December 2024 through December 2025)\*\*

\*\*Source: (Boone County Coalition to End Homelessness [BCCE], n.d.)

## Figure 10: Individuals on Prioritization List vs. Open Voucher Referrals, Boone County, MO

Individuals on Prioritization List vs. Open Voucher Referrals, Boone County, Mo. (Dec 2024 - Dec 2025)		
Month And Year	Individuals On List	Open Voucher Referrals
Dec 2024	338	12
Jan 2025	304	12
February 2025	274	11
Mar 2025	234	11
April 2025	214	7
May 2025	252	17
June 2025	213	9
July 2025	247	15
Aug 2025	242	15
Sep 2025	254	15
Oct 2025	261	10
Nov 2025	290	7
Dec 2025	265	23

Between December 2024 and December 2025, the number of open voucher referrals consistently remain significantly lower than the number of individuals on the Boone County Priority List (Boone County Coaliti Homelessness, n.d.). Open voucher referrals ranged from seven to 23 per month. Even at its peak in Decem with only 23 open referrals, available housing opportunities address only a small fraction of the individuals

This consistent disparity highlights the structural imbalance between housing demand and available permanent housing resources within the local system.

### What is an “open voucher referral?”

**Answer:** An open voucher referral is a housing voucher that has been issued but not yet used. This means the recipient has been approved for assistance, but they are still in the process of finding a landlord who will accept the voucher.

## Stability through Housing and Support Harry S. Truman Memorial Veterans’ Hospital

In 2025, a Boone County Veteran entered Substance Use Disorder (SUD) treatment after years of experier substance use and involvement in the criminal justice system. Prior to this admission, he had never utilized services through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

After successfully completing treatment, he transitioned to Welcome Home and was quickly connected to Columbia through a voucher from the Columbia Housing Authority (CHA) through the U.S. Department of Urban Development–Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) program. Securing stable housing meaningful turning point in his recovery.

Since moving into his home, he has maintained nearly one full year of housing stability and continued progr recovery. He participated in the Transitional Work (TW) program for six months and remained employed in community.

On March 1, 2026, he met VA criteria for discharge from the HUD-VASH program and became fully respon paying his rent independently.

Over the past year, he has consistently paid his bills on time, maintained a clean and welcoming home, regai driver’s license, and purchased his own vehicle.

In the span of one year, this Veteran rebuilt stability across housing, employment, and health. His progress can happen when treatment access, stable housing, and coordinated community support align.

## From Homelessness to Stability: Kinney Point and Family Self-Sufficiency

The new housing units at CHA’s Kinney Point reflect a coordinated investment in housing solutions for indi families who previously experienced homelessness.

Potential residents were connected to housing through community agencies. For many, placement at Kinne marked the transition from housing instability to permanent housing.

Housing is only the first step.

Following housing, eligible residents may enroll in the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program, administered l Columbia Housing Authority. The FSS program is a five-year, voluntary initiative designed to support long-t financial growth and economic mobility. Participants establish escrow savings accounts and build assets as income increases. On average, participants complete the program with approximately \$14,000 in savings. E savings, the program supports credit building, employment advancement, education, transportation access self-identified goals.

In 2025, 8 Kinney Point residents enrolled in FSS. One newly enrolled participant recently secured employment and began contributing to his escrow account, taking an early step toward financial independence.

Kinney Point demonstrates how permanent housing and economic mobility programming can work together to resolve the immediate crisis of homelessness. Programs like FSS build the foundation for long-term stability and reduced risk of future housing instability. Together, these efforts illustrate that ending homelessness requires more than units alone. It requires coordinated housing placement, sustained support, and pathways to economic mobility.

## Conclusion

The 2025 data show all available housing vouchers were being used, 152 households were housed, and coc entry continues to function as designed. These are indicators of strong system coordination and community engagement. However, demand continues to exceed supply across shelter beds and voucher referrals.

Shelter bed capacity has increased modestly since 2019, reaching 298 beds in 2025, while 309 individuals were identified as experiencing homelessness this year. Although the gap narrowed slightly compared to 2024, it remains in a position where demand consistently meets or exceeds available beds. Similarly, while open voucher referrals peaked at 23 in December 2025, they addressed only a small fraction of the 163 households (265 on the Prioritization List) that same month.

A detailed housing system capacity and gaps analysis is available via <https://moboscoc.org/resources/detailed-analysis/>.

The upcoming opening of Voluntary Action Center's Opportunity Campus in July 2026 represents a significant investment in low-barrier shelter, stabilization services, and coordinated connections to housing. This expansion will strengthen the community's ability to respond to individuals in crisis and improve system navigation.

The Prioritization List data show an overall decline, from 338 individuals in December 2024 to 265 in December 2025, a net decrease of 73 individuals. Single adults remain the majority of households served, while there was a decrease in family households during the latter half of 2025.

While homelessness nationally reached a record high in 2024, increasing 18% over the prior year (National End Homelessness, 2025b), Boone County's Prioritization List showed a net decrease over the same period. A reduction in homelessness will depend on expanding affordable housing availability, increasing landlord participation in preserving existing affordable units, and aligning policy and funding with long-term housing solutions. Sustained sector collaboration will remain essential to ensuring that expanded crisis capacity translates into long-term stability for individuals and families.

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