

*Each person is a branch of  
strength within the community.*

*Strong branches make a  
strong community!*

**2021 Summit County  
Homelessness Report**



**Summit County  
Continuum of Care**



# Executive Summary

*This Executive Summary highlights key findings from this report and how our community responded in creative ways to meet the needs of the homeless during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021. This report and the data trends can only be understood within the context of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Caution should be used in making longer-term conclusions about the data.*

## COVID-19 RESPONSE

In 2021, the SCCoC continued to follow guidance from health department authorities and actively work to prevent the spread of the virus in our community in collaboration with local hospitals, street outreach teams, emergency shelters, the health department, and transitional housing providers. Highlighted below are some of the various strategies used by the SCCoC:

- Provision of additional funding to homeless shelters to meet social distancing requirements, mask mandates, cleaning and disinfecting standards, and other guidance to keep staff and clients safe.
- Establishment of a non-congregate shelter program to ensure homeless individuals/families who tested positive or were symptomatic and awaiting results had a place to quarantine safely in motels.
- Improved sanitation in encampments through the provision of portable restroom facilities with functional water taps and additional hand washing stations that are accessible 24 hours a day.

## PARTNERING WITH LANDLORDS

The SCCoC recognizes that private landlords are essential to reducing homelessness in Summit County because the primary resource for individuals exiting homeless shelters is Rapid Re-housing (RRH) in a private rental unit. Finding an available unit to lease and getting approved by the landlord is also one of the biggest challenges facing homeless individuals and families. Only 40% of clients who complete a RRH intake are successfully housed and it takes an average of 69 days to house each client. In 2021, the SCCoC implemented a Landlord Mitigation Program to incentivize landlords to rent to previously homeless individuals. The program includes the following:

- Financial incentives such as sign on bonuses and reimbursements if property is damaged by a program participant.
- Mediation by the client's case manager if issues arise between the landlord and tenant.
- Hiring a staff person to serve as a Housing Locator to conduct targeted recruitment of landlords to participate in the program.

## ADDRESSING YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

Reducing homelessness among unaccompanied youth ages 13 to 24 is a key priority of the SCCoC. In 2021, the SCCoC commissioned a Youth Needs Assessment to identify gaps in service to homeless youth and began taking steps to fill in identified gaps in service by:

- Developing an active Youth Advisory Board consisting of youth with lived experience of homelessness and history of utilizing local resources to inform and refine our systems and processes.
- Implementing improved data collection strategies to better understand the scope of youth homelessness.
- Focusing on especially vulnerable subpopulations including single victims of domestic violence, re-entry clients and youth identifying as LGBTQ+.
- Increasing transitional housing capacity that places youth in a communal housing context with a clearly defined next step.

**The COVID-19 Eviction Moratorium and the availability of large amounts of federal rent assistance funding to assist households financially impacted by COVID-19 has resulted in a decrease in homelessness in Summit County in 2021.**

- Over 5,800 households in Summit County received \$26 million in federal emergency rental assistance in 2021.
- Since so many households qualified for other federal emergency rental assistance, there has been a decrease in households receiving homeless prevention related rent assistance through the Summit County Continuum of Care (CoC).

**While there was an increase in the number of small homeless encampments during the pandemic, the Summit County CoC responded by increasing outreach to these camps and providing innovative options to exit camps.**

- Summit County received an additional 101 Emergency Housing Vouchers from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in 2021. The Summit County CoC prioritized using these vouchers to help people in encampments enter permanent housing.
- The Summit County CoC is working with the City of Akron to establish emergency and transitional housing options for individuals in encampments to stabilize before entering permanent housing. In 2021, the Summit County CoC used extra federal pandemic funding to pilot various options for emergency and transitional housing.
- Street outreach contacts and ongoing engagement increased compared to 2020 but remained lower than before the pandemic.

**Due to social distancing recommendations, shelter capacity continued to be lower than normal in 2021. The Summit County CoC implemented a variety of strategies to supplement capacity and reduce transmission of COVID-19.**

- The Summit County CoC housed 145 homeless individuals who had COVID-19 or had been exposed to COVID-19 in motels in 2021 to reduce transmission of COVID-19 in the shelter system.
- The Summit County CoC provided financial support for an overflow winter shelter in 2021. This shelter was open on nights with very cold weather to ensure sufficient capacity to house all individuals seeking shelter.

# Combating Homelessness HIGHLIGHTS

2021

2021 Highlights

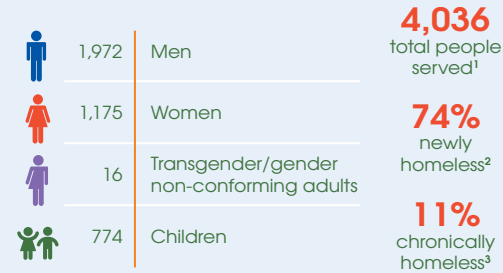
97%  
of people who exit  
to Permanent  
Supportive Housing  
stay housed

89%  
of people who  
exited homelessness  
to permanent  
housing in 2019  
remained housed  
for at least  
six months

81%  
of people who  
exited homelessness  
to permanent  
housing in 2019  
remained housed  
for at least  
two years

## Profile of Homelessness in Summit County

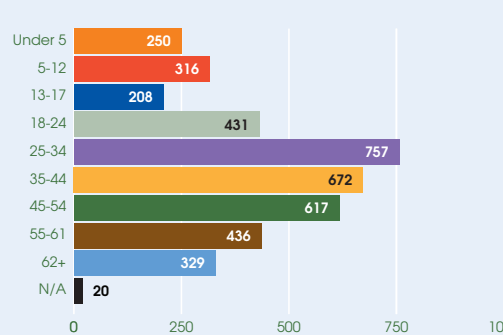
### PEOPLE SERVED



### SPECIAL POPULATIONS<sup>4</sup>



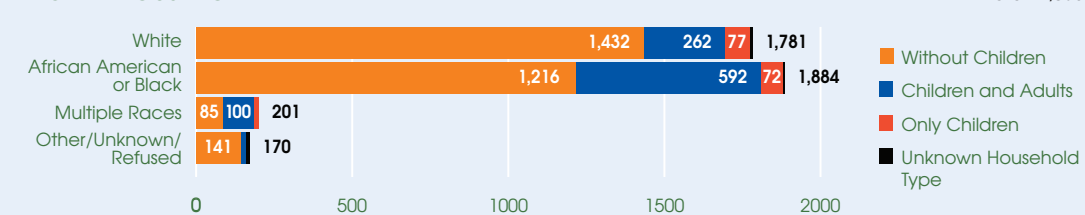
### AGE



### ETHNICITY

**2.3%** Hispanic/Latino ethnicity

### RACE BY HOUSEHOLD TYPE



<sup>1</sup> This report was created based on data in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) of Summit County on individuals who were homeless at some point during 2021, were previously homeless and continued to be served by a SCCoC program in 2021, or were at risk of homelessness and accessed homelessness prevention services in 2021. As a result of the Violence Against Women Act of 2005, providers whose core mission is to serve victims of domestic violence are prohibited from entering client-level data in HMIS. Therefore, data from Hope and Healing Battered Women's Shelter are represented separately in the chart titled "Assistance Provided for Domestic Violence Victims."

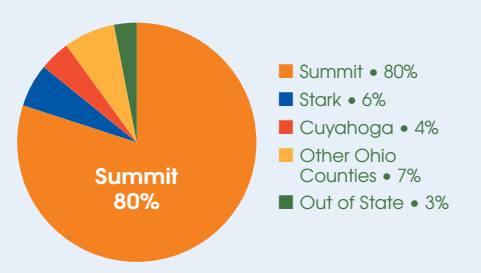
<sup>2</sup> Newly homeless is defined as someone who did not access Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing or Permanent Housing resources within 24 months prior to their entry during the reporting year.

<sup>3</sup> Chronically homeless describes a person with a disability who has one year of continuous homelessness (living in a shelter or place not meant for human habitation) or four episodes of homelessness over a three-year period that total 12 months of homelessness.

<sup>4</sup> The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has identified these four special populations for focused attention. When applicable, individuals are represented in more than one category.

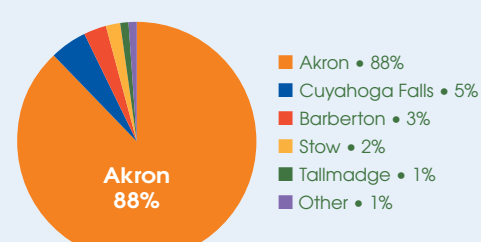
### LAST PERMANENT COUNTY

Total: 3,439

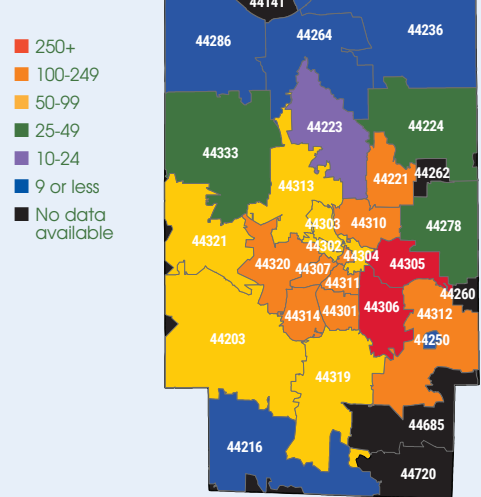


### LAST PERMANENT CITY IN SUMMIT COUNTY

Total: 2,738



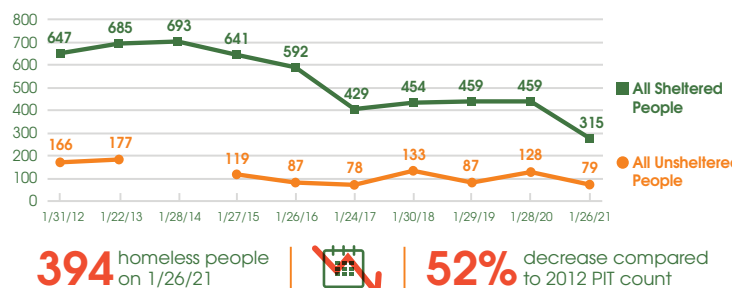
### SUMMIT COUNTY HOMELESS BY ZIP CODE



2021

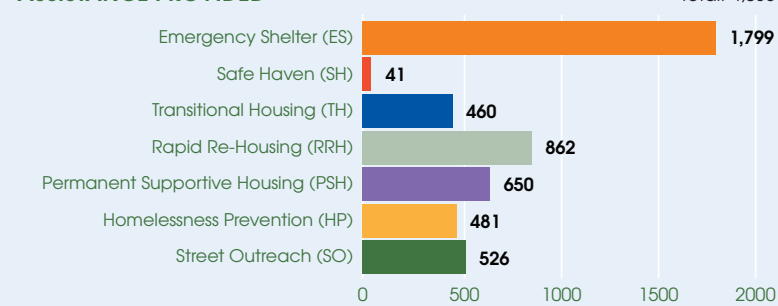
## Profile of Homelessness in Summit County (continued)

### SHELTERED AND UNSHELTERED POINT-IN-TIME COUNT (2012-2021)<sup>5</sup>



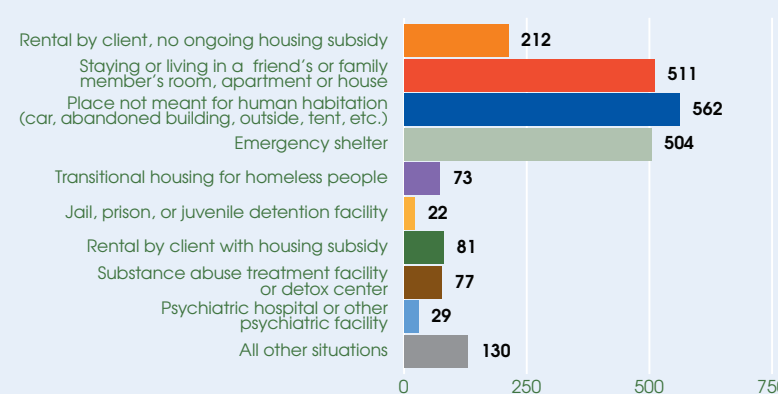
### ASSISTANCE PROVIDED<sup>6</sup>

Total: 4,036



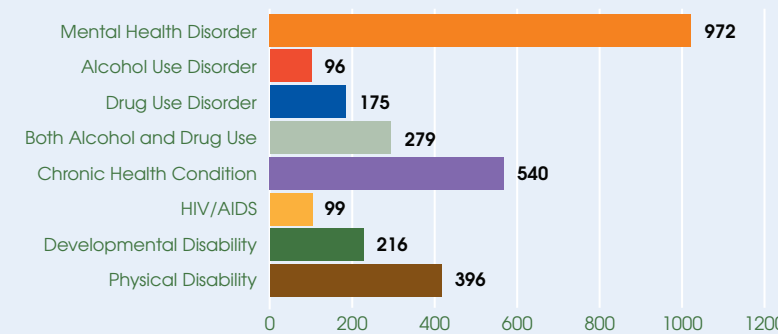
### PRIOR LIVING SITUATION

Total: 2,201



### HEALTH CONDITIONS<sup>6</sup>

Total: 1,469



<sup>5</sup> In 2014, HUD did not require communities to conduct an unsheltered count of homeless individuals, so no data for this indicator is available for that year. While the unsheltered count is only required every other year, Summit County has since decided to conduct an unsheltered count every year. Considerable effort is made to conduct a complete Point-in-Time Count each year.

<sup>6</sup> When applicable, individuals are represented in more than one category.

<sup>7</sup> The data in this chart was provided by Hope and Healing Battered Women's Shelter on individuals served in Summit County.

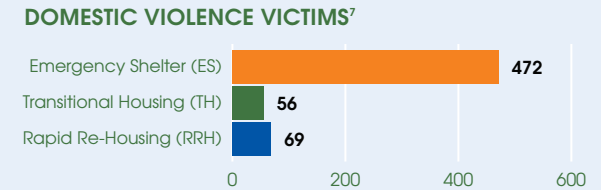
<sup>8</sup> There is no bed count for HP or SO.

### TOTAL BEDS BY HOUSING TYPE

Housing Type	Beds Dedicated for Domestic Violence Victims	All Other Beds	Total Beds
Emergency Shelter (ES)	68	215	283
Safe Haven (SH)	0	22	22
Transitional Housing (TH)	68	145	213
Rapid Re-Housing (RRH)	91	128	219
Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)	0	683	683
TOTAL BEDS	227	1,193	1,420

### ASSISTANCE PROVIDED FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE VICTIMS<sup>7</sup>

Total: 541



## Types of Housing Assistance

### EMERGENCY SHELTER (ES):

Any facility with overnight sleeping accommodations, the primary purpose of which is to provide temporary shelter for the homeless in general or for specific populations of homeless people. The length of stay can range from one night to as much as three months.

### SAFE HAVEN (SH):

A form of supportive housing that serves hard-to-reach homeless people with severe mental illness who are on the street and have been unable or unwilling to participate in supportive services.

### TRANSITIONAL HOUSING (TH):

A program that is designed to provide homeless individuals and families with housing and appropriate supportive services to facilitate the successful transition to permanent housing within 24 months.

### RAPID RE-HOUSING (RRH):

An intervention that rapidly connects families and individuals experiencing homelessness to permanent housing through a tailored package of assistance that may include the use of time-limited financial assistance and targeted supportive services.

### PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING (PSH):

Long-term community-based housing and supportive services for homeless people with disabilities. The intent of this type of supportive housing is to enable this special-needs population to live as independently as possible in a permanent setting.

### HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION (HP)<sup>8</sup>:

Services that help individuals and families at risk of homelessness to maintain their existing housing or transition to new permanent housing and may include housing relocation and stabilization services as well as short- and medium-term rental assistance.

### STREET OUTREACH (SO)<sup>8</sup>:

Essential services related to reaching out to unsheltered homeless individuals and families, connecting them with emergency shelter, housing, or critical services, and providing them with urgent, non-facility-based care. May include engagement, case management, emergency health and mental health services, transportation, and services for special populations.



Summit County Cares is the front door for various government funded assistance designed to help keep families and individuals living in Summit County, Ohio housed in the wake of the historic economic recession caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Summit County Cares is a partnership of local government and community organizations.

APPLICANT GENDER



HOUSING ASSISTANCE

Total Payments:	\$24,250,720
Average Payment:	\$4,326

UTILITY ASSISTANCE

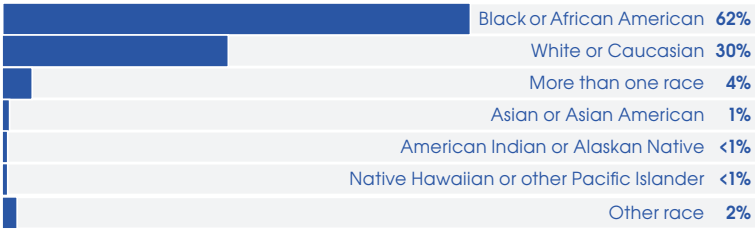
Total Payments:	\$1,816,267
Average Payment:	\$353



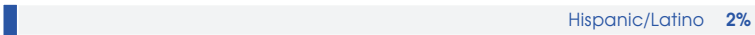
Summit County Cares provided **\$26,066,986** In housing and utility assistance in 2021.

Summit County Cares helped **13,225 people** remain housed in 2021.

APPLICANT RACE



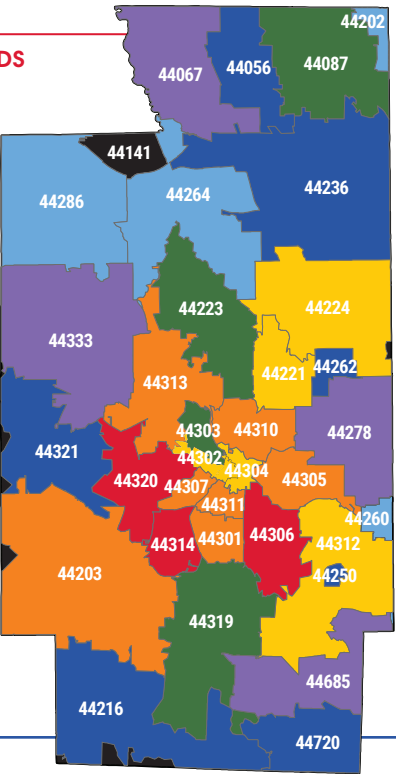
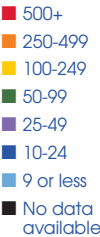
APPLICANT ETHNICITY



**2 out of every 5** households helped had school aged children.

Summit County Cares served people from every municipality in Summit County

HOUSEHOLDS SERVED BY ZIP CODE



# Summit County Continuum of Care

The Summit County Continuum of Care (SCCoC) has been operating since 1997. It is designed to promote a community-wide commitment to the goal of ending homelessness, by providing funding to nonprofit housing providers, to quickly rehouse homeless individuals and families.

The SCCoC currently collaborates with over 48 agencies in Summit County to combat homelessness. We fund 31 different housing programs that range from Transitional Housing and Safe Haven, to Rapid Rehousing and Permanent Supportive Housing. Many of our programs are dedicated to serving veterans, youth, chronically homeless, severely mentally ill, people struggling with substance abuse, people with HIV/AIDS, and victims of domestic violence.

We are always looking to collaborate with more individuals and agencies who have a stake in homelessness. Our goal is to create more awareness, bring more resources into our community, and implement innovative ideas to help end homelessness in Summit County. For more information about the SCCoC, please visit our website, [www.summitcoc.org](http://www.summitcoc.org)

## PARTNER AGENCIES

- ACCESS Shelter
- Akron AIDS Collaborative
- Akron Children's Hospital
- Akron Fire Department
- Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority
- Akron Police Department
- CANAPI
- City of Akron
- City of Barberton
- City of Cuyahoga Falls
- Community Health Center
- Community Legal Aid
- Community Support Services
- Fair Housing Contact Service
- Family & Community Services
- Family Promise
- Freedom BLOC
- Harmony House
- Haven of Rest
- Hope and Healing (Battered Women's Shelter)
- Hope Farm
- Humility of Mary Housing
- Joanna House II
- Legacy III
- NISRE (The EXIT Program)
- North Coast Community Homes
- Ohio Multi-County Development Corporation
- Oriana House
- Peter Maurin Center
- Project Rise (Akron Public Schools)
- Salvation Army
- Shelter Care
- Snow Angels
- Stark State College
- Summit County
- Summit County ADM Board
- Summit County Children Services
- Summit County Department of Job and Family Services
- Summit County Juvenile Court
- Summit County Public Health
- Tarry House
- The Homeless Charity
- Tow Path Trail High School
- Truly Reaching You
- United Way of Summit & Medina
- University of Akron
- Veteran's Health Administration
- Victim Assistance Program



**Summit County**  
**Continuum**  
**of Care**

441 Wolf Ledges Parkway, Suite 100, Akron, Ohio 44311  
Homeless Hotline: 2-1-1 or (330) 615-0577  
[www.summitcoc.org](http://www.summitcoc.org)