

# Homelessness Among Youth Exiting Systems of Care in Washington State

MAY 2022

## About this Report

This report provides information on the housing status of annual cohorts of youth (ages 12 to 17) and young adults (ages 18 to 24) exiting Washington state residential behavioral health, foster care, and criminal justice systems from July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020. Youth aging out of foster care, discharged from publicly paid inpatient mental health or substance use disorder treatment, or released from Juvenile Rehabilitation institutions or the state's adult Department of Corrections facilities are followed over a 12-month period post-release using state administrative data. Administrative information on housing status is used to estimate homelessness rates within 12 months of discharge/release. County-level breakdowns and a detailed profile of youth exiting state systems of care by homelessness status are provided for the most recent calendar year.

*These measures were produced by the DSHS Research and Data Analysis Division in collaboration with the Washington State Department of Commerce*

## Youth Populations

Three populations are examined: 1) youth and young adults exiting publicly funded inpatient treatment for mental health or substance use; 2) young adults (ages 18-24) who "age out" of foster care in a given year; and 3) youth and young adults released from state juvenile rehabilitation institutions and young adults released from state Department of Corrections facilities.

## Homelessness

Youth and young adults are determined to be homeless if: 1) they are identified as homeless based on living arrangement or address information in the Automated Client Eligibility System (ACES); or 2) they received a housing service targeting homeless individuals that was recorded in the Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS).

### CONTRIBUTORS

Hanna Hernandez  
Taylor Danielson  
Jim Mayfield  
Callie Black  
Barbara Felver

### CONTENTS

Youth Homelessness At-a-Glance	2
Characteristics of Youth Exiting State Systems of Care by Housing Status	3
Distribution of Youth Exiting State Systems of Care by Housing Status and County	4
Technical Notes	5

[www.dshs.wa.gov/rda/](http://www.dshs.wa.gov/rda/)

*NOTE: This report replaces the "Housing Status of Youth Exiting Foster Care, Behavioral Health and Criminal Justice Systems" (Report 11.240) previously produced by RDA.*

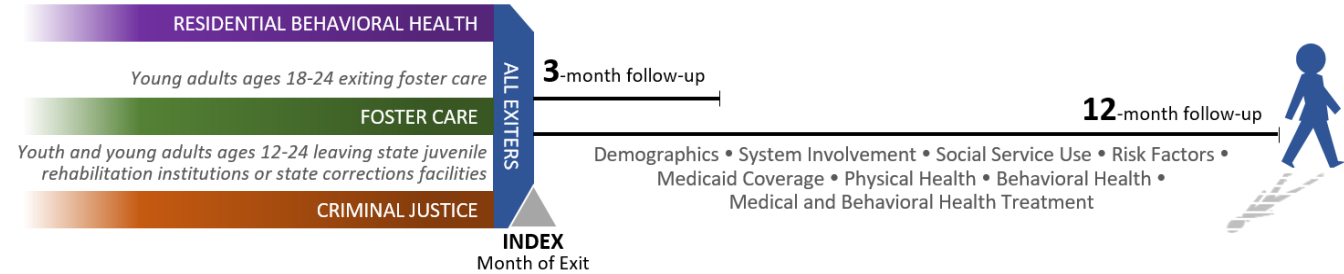
RDA Report Number 11.254

# Youth and Young Adult Homelessness At-a-Glance

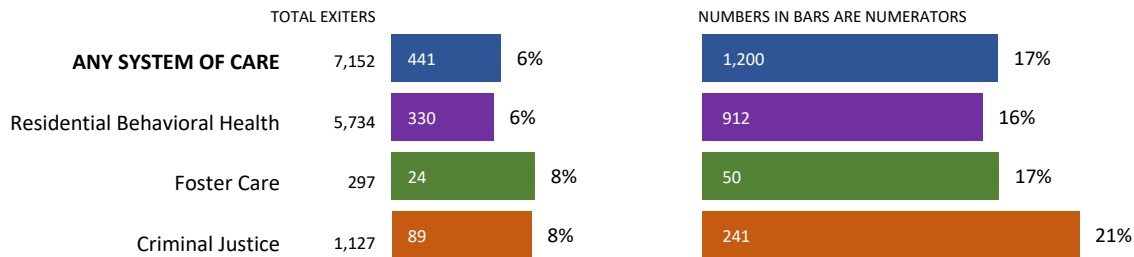
State Fiscal Year 2020

Three study populations are followed for 12 months after program exit . . .

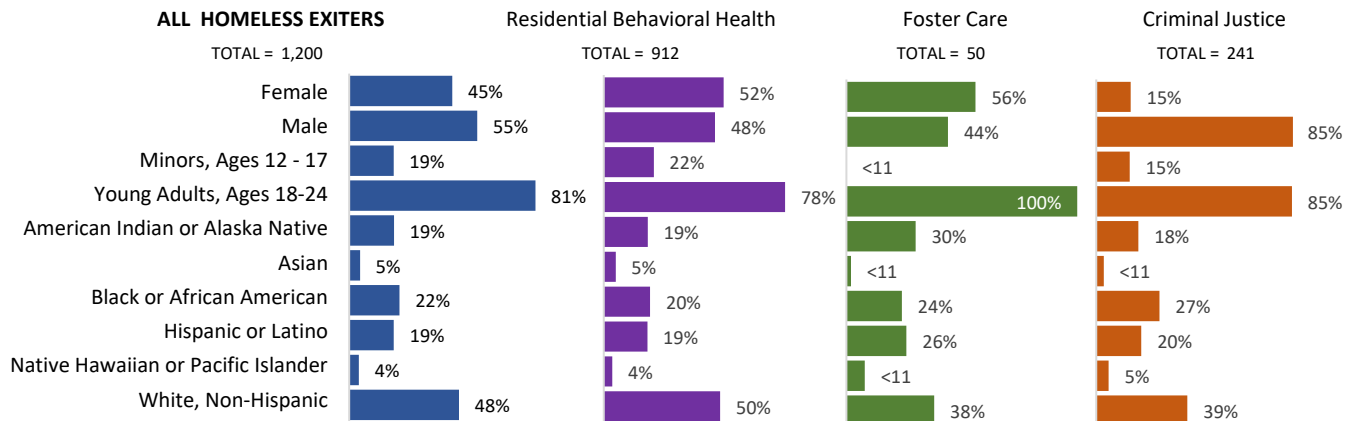
Youth and young adults ages 12-24 exiting publicly funded inpatient treatment for mental health or substance use



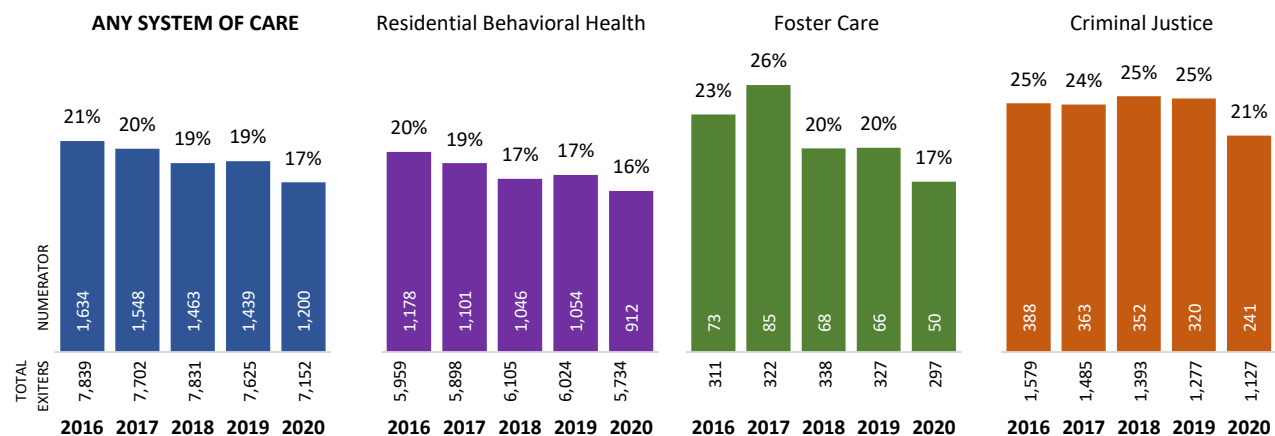
Percent who were homeless within 3 months after exit . . . within 12 months after exit . . .



Demographic characteristics of homeless exiters by system of care . . .



5-year trend in homelessness by system of care . . .



SOURCE: Integrated Client Databases

CONTACT: Jim Mayfield, DSHS Research and Data Analysis Division, 360.902.0764

# Youth and Young Adults Exiting State Systems of Care by Housing Status

State Fiscal Year 2020

	Exiters Who Were Not Homeless in Follow-Up Period					
	Exiters Who Were Homeless in Follow-Up Period					
	All Exiters					
	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT
Population Size	7,152		1,200		5,952	
<b>Demographics</b>						
Minors, Ages 12 - 17	2,375	33%	231	19%	2,144	36%
Young Adults, Ages 18 - 24	4,772	67%	967	81%	3,805	64%
American Indian or Alaska Native	1,194	17%	233	19%	961	16%
Asian	378	5%	56	5%	322	5%
Black or African American	1,228	17%	261	22%	967	16%
Hispanic or Latino	1,715	24%	232	19%	1,483	25%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	318	4%	50	4%	268	5%
White, Non-Hispanic	3,261	46%	570	48%	2,691	45%
Missing Race/Ethnicity	66	1%	< 11	—	63	1%
Female	3,315	46%	535	45%	2,780	47%
Male	3,834	54%	665	55%	3,169	53%
<b>System Involvement, SFY 2020</b>						
Child Welfare (DCYF)	2,646	37%	501	42%	2,145	36%
Foster Care (DCYF)	645	9%	135	11%	510	9%
Received Behavioral Rehabilitation Services	169	2%	52	4%	117	2%
Detained in a Juvenile Rehabilitation Facility	647	9%	132	11%	515	9%
Detained in an Adult Correctional Facility or Jail	778	11%	186	16%	592	10%
Any Psychiatric Inpatient Services (HCA, DSHS)	1,805	25%	347	29%	1,458	24%
Any Substance Use Disorder Inpatient Services (HCA)	1,179	16%	309	26%	870	15%
Engaged with 2+ Systems of Care	588	8%	174	15%	414	7%
Readmitted to Any State System of Care	1,913	27%	475	40%	1,438	24%
<b>Social Services, 24 Months Prior to Exit</b>						
Any State or Federal Cash/Food Assistance (DSHS)	5,241	73%	1,033	86%	4,208	71%
Basic Food	4,381	61%	918	77%	3,463	58%
Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)	761	11%	161	13%	600	10%
Housing and Essential Needs (HEN)	123	2%	34	3%	89	1%
<b>Medicaid Coverage, 24 Months Prior to Exit</b>						
Any Medical Assistance	6,590	92%	1,127	94%	5,463	92%
<b>Medical History - Physical Health, 24 Months Prior to Exit of Those with Medical Assistance</b>						
Emergency Department Outpatient Visits (1 or more)	4,747	72%	900	80%	3,847	70%
Emergency Department Outpatient Visits (4 or more)	1,928	29%	466	41%	1,462	27%
Any Inpatient Hospitalization in a General Medical Setting	2,300	35%	475	42%	1,825	33%
Any Admission to a Medical Detoxification Facility	467	7%	147	13%	320	6%
<b>Medical History - Behavioral Health, 24 Months Prior to Exit of Those with Medical Assistance</b>						
Any Indication of a Mental Illness	5,533	84%	964	86%	4,569	84%
Any Indication of a Substance Use Disorder (SUD)	3,549	54%	793	70%	2,756	50%
Any Indication of a Co-Occurring Mental Illness and SUD	3,188	48%	711	63%	2,477	45%
<b>Risk Factors</b>						
Any Indication of Neglect or Abuse Prior to Exit	4,163	58%	812	68%	3,351	56%
Any Indication of Homelessness Prior to Exit	3,362	47%	848	71%	2,514	42%
Ever Arrested or Charged for a Crime	4,100	57%	914	76%	3,186	54%
Never Employed in SFY 2020, <i>of those 18 and older</i>	1,827	38%	400	41%	1,427	37%

# Youth and Young Adults Exiting a State System of Care by County and Housing Status

State Fiscal Year 2020

	All Youth and Young Adults, Ages 12-24 <i>Unduplicated</i>		Counties with Percent of Homeless Exiters Less than <b>15%</b>
	ALL EXITERS	HOMELESS	
WASHINGTON	7,152	1,200	
Adams	13	< 11	
Asotin	27	< 11	✓
Benton	237	51	
Chelan	80	13	
Clallam	111	16	✓
Clark	454	66	✓
Columbia	< 11	< 11	✓
Cowlitz	128	24	
Douglas	54	< 11	✓
Ferry	< 11	< 11	✓
Franklin	70	< 11	✓
Garfield	< 11	< 11	✓
Grant	85	12	✓
Grays Harbor	132	22	
Island	73	< 11	✓
Jefferson	26	< 11	✓
King	1,314	217	
Kitsap	204	35	
Kittitas	60	< 11	
Klickitat	25	< 11	✓
Lewis	114	22	
Lincoln	12	< 11	
Mason	84	11	✓
Okanogan	42	< 11	
Pacific	31	< 11	✓
Pend Oreille	17	< 11	✓
Pierce	781	140	
San Juan	12	< 11	✓
Skagit	151	25	
Skamania	11	< 11	
Snohomish	703	119	
Spokane	846	151	
Stevens	57	< 11	✓
Thurston	355	54	
Wahkiakum	< 11	< 11	
Walla Walla	61	15	
Whatcom	242	46	
Whitman	25	< 11	✓
Yakima	463	90	
Unknown	32	< 11	✓

## TECHNICAL NOTES

---

**Data Sources:** Identification of the study population, system involvement, information on inpatient services, homelessness, and incarceration records are based on information from the Integrated Client Databases (ICDB). The ICDB combines measures derived from the following administrative systems, among others: ProviderOne (medical claims, diagnoses, and behavioral health inpatient admissions), FamLink (foster care), ACT (juvenile rehabilitation institutions and community facilities), the Behavioral Health Data System (behavioral health inpatient admissions), the Automated Client Eligibility System (economic services and homelessness), and the Homeless Management Information System (housing services and homelessness).

**Population:** Youth and young adults who exited from any of the following state systems in state fiscal year (SFY) 2020.

1. **Foster Care:** Young adults who exited a foster care placement, were 18 or older at the time of exit, and did not return to foster care.
2. **State-Operated Correctional Facility:** Youth ages 12 and older who exited a Juvenile Rehabilitation institution or community placement facility or young adults ages 18 to 24 exiting a Department of Corrections facility.
3. **Inpatient Behavioral Health:** Youth or young adults ages 12 to 24 who received state- or federally- funded treatment in an inpatient psychiatric facility (i.e., community mental health hospitals, evaluation and treatment facilities, the Children's Long-Term Inpatient Program, the Child Study and Treatment Center, or the state hospitals), inpatient substance use disorder treatment setting, or medical detoxification facility and exited this setting during SFY 2020.

**NOTE:** A value of "< 11" indicates that the contents of a cell have been suppressed in accordance with the Health Care Authority's suppression rules because the total youth count in that cell was less than or equal to 10.

**NOTE:** Currently, state data systems do not systematically collect information on all gender identities. Only male and female gender categories are provided in this report.

## MEASUREMENT PERIODS

---

The month in which a youth is released or discharged from a facility or ages out of foster care is the reference month (Month 0). Housing status is reported for Month +1 through Month +3 (i.e., Homeless within 3 months) and for Month +1 through Month +12 (i.e., Homeless within 12 months). Demographic information is reported as of the reference month. Case history lookback windows begin in the month prior to the reference month (Month -1) and go back through Month - 24 (e.g., mental health treatment need), or over a youth's entire history (e.g., maltreatment history).

## MEASURES

---

**Homeless Status:** Determined based on: 1) client living arrangement (*Homeless without Housing, Emergency Shelter, Battered Spouse Shelter, Inappropriate Living Situation*) from the Automated Client Eligibility System (ACES); 2) address information in ACES indicating that a youth was homeless (e.g., a youth's address was "homeless"); or 3) housing service information recorded in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). Youth were identified as homeless if they experienced a new homeless spell in the 12 months following exit from a state system of care.

**Readmitted:** Youth are considered readmitted if they return to any institutional setting (residential/inpatient treatment for mental health or substance use; Juvenile Rehabilitation institution/community facility or adult correctional facility; or foster care) at anytime during the 12-month follow-up period. Youth may count as readmitted and homeless if both conditions apply during the follow-up period.

**County:** Assigned as of the last month that a youth or young adult exited any state system of care.