

Homelessness is one of the most difficult experiences people have in our community, resulting in 7,872 people experiencing the traumatic instability that results from losing housing.

Homelessness decreased by less than one percent this year and its persistence is cause for concern. Efforts in the community to reduce homelessness among particular subpopulations, such as the chronically homeless or veterans, have been successful due to data-driven, targeted efforts to ensure there are sufficient housing resources available that meet these population's needs. The same tactics can be applied to the broader community through efforts to secure more affordable, sustainable housing. The common denominator for everyone lost their housing is that they lived circumstances where they could not afford it.

The Continuum of Care refers to the unified geography covered by the HUD HEARTH Act Continuum of Care grants. The Homeless Alliance of WNY is the lead agency for this region, which includes **Erie, Niagara, Genesee, Orleans, and Wyoming Counties**, coordinating the application and facilitating strategic dialog between grantees of this grant and other funding sources to ensure a unified, effective, and efficient effort to end homelessness in the region. The Homeless Alliance also operates the local Homeless Management Information System, also known as BAS-Net (Buffalo Area Services- NETWORK) which collects information on all HUD-funded and voluntarily participating non-HUD-funded homelessness alleviation providers, including outreach, emergency shelters, permanent supportive housing (including all housing first programs), rapid re-housing, and transitional housing providers.

Key Findings and Recommendations

Overall

	2017 HMIS	2017 Estimated Total Count	2018 HMIS	2018 Estimated Total Count	% Change
NY-508	5092	7888	5550	7872	-0.20%
Erie County	4309	5705	4289	5742	0.65%
Niagara County	814	1702	1069	1600	-6.02%
Genesee County	97	298	65	304	1.94%
Orleans County	0	272	236	280	2.90%
Wyoming County	0	47	0	56	19.15%

Table 1: Total Homelessness

NY-508 Point-in-Time ¹	Unsheltered Homeless Count	Sheltered Homeless Count	Total
January 26, 2011	178	760	938
October 26, 2011	135	N/A	N/A
January 26, 2012	106	804	910
July 26, 2012	131	N/A	N/A
January 30, 2013	98	750	848
January 29, 2014	64	784	848
July 22, 2014	119	N/A	N/A
January 28, 2015	61	858	919
January 26, 2016	57	905	962
January 25, 2017	18	907	925
January 24, 2018	15	942	957
January 23, 2019	33	891	924

Table 2: Point-in-Time

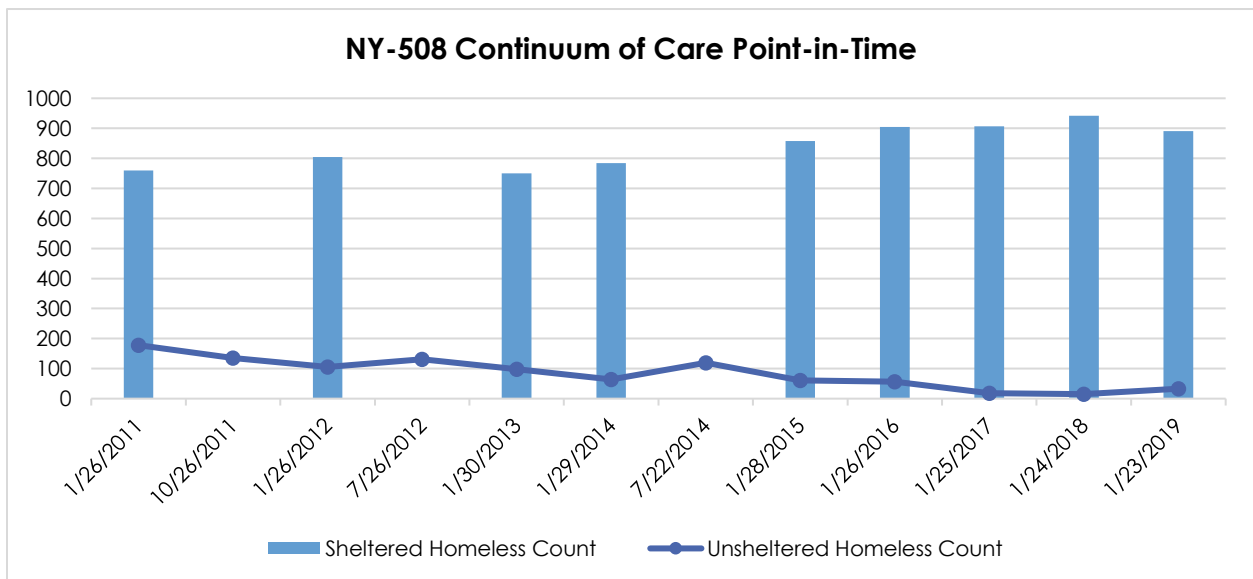


Figure 1: Total homelessness during PIT counts

¹ In 2011 and 2012, NY-508 included Erie County. In 2013-2015, it included Niagara County as well. In 2016 to present, it includes Genesee, Orleans, and Wyoming Counties

Methods of Tabulation

The adjusted total is determined using repeat rates based on the number of duplicated clients served at HMIS-participating providers to account for clients who could have been counted in both participating and non-participating programs.

Only providers who receive city and federal funding are required to use HMIS; other service providers may opt in. Those who do not have an entire year's worth of data in HMIS provide the Homeless Alliance of WNY with annual counts of the number of clients they served. In order to account for clients who may have been served by both participating and non-participating HMIS providers, we adjust their provided total based on the duplication rates for that household and project type in HMIS.

ADJUSTED BY DATA SOURCE		
Source	Total	Adjusted Total
HMIS Participating Providers	5550	5550
Back to Basics	68	58
Erie County DSS - Hotels	492	432
Faith-Based Fellowship	81	70
Haven House	346	304
Haven House TH	18	18
Little Portion Friary	615	529
St. Luke's Estimate	50	43
Carolyn's House (DV)	112	98
God's Woman - WINGS	13	11
Lockport Cares	226	199
PASSAGE (DV)	126	111
YWCA Niagara DV Shelter	81	71
YWCA Niagara DV TH	41	41
Genesee County DSS	248	218
Genesee DV	24	21
Orleans DV -- Pathstone	50	44
Wyoming County Community Action	11	10
Wyoming County DSS	52	46
TOTAL	8204	7872

Table 3: Overall Homelessness Tabulation

Source of Information	Gross	Adjusted
HMIS Participating Providers	4289	4289
Back to Basics	68	58
Erie County DSS - Hotels	492	432
Faith-Based Fellowship	81	70
Haven House	346	304
Haven House TH	18	18
Little Portion Friary	615	529

St. Luke's Estimate	50	43
Totals	5959	5742

Table 4: Erie County Homelessness Tabulation

Source of Information	TOTAL	Adjusted
HMIS Participating Providers	1069	1069
Carolyn's House (DV)	112	98
God's Woman - WINGS	13	11
Lockport Cares	226	199
PASSAGE (DV)	126	111
YWCA Niagara DV Shelter	81	71
YWCA Niagara DV TH	41	41
TOTAL	1668	1600

Table 5: Niagara County Homelessness Tabulation

Source of Information	Total
HMIS Participating Providers	65
Genesee County DSS	218
Genesee DV	21
Total	304

Table 6: Genesee County Homelessness Tabulation

Source of Information	Total
HMIS	236
Orleans DV	44
Total	280

Table 7: Orleans County Homelessness Tabulation

Source of Information	Total
Wyoming County Community Action	10
Wyoming County DSS	46
Total	56

Table 8: Wyoming County Homelessness Tabulation

Household Type and Location	Repeat Percentage
Emergency Shelter – Families	12.2%
Emergency Shelter – Individuals	14.0%
Transitional Housing – Families	0%
Transitional Housing – Individuals	4.7%

Table 9: Repeat rates used to determine likely duplication among non-HMIS participating providers based on HMIS participating providers

Conclusion: Policy Recommendations

Homelessness continues to be a persistent social problem, despite the slight decrease in the number of people who experienced it in the CoC service area. We recommend the following:

- There is a growing affordable housing crisis throughout Western New York. Rents are increasing at alarming rates and those living in poverty are getting priced out of housing altogether.
- A report by the National Low Income Housing Coalition states that the Buffalo-Niagara Falls metropolitan area has a shortage of 46,000 affordable housing units.
- An increase in the number of Section 8 vouchers is needed to give low income renters greater mobility rather than having limited affordable housing options.
- Local, State and National leaders must recognize the affordable housing crisis and develop a plan to address the need.
- New York State needs to adopt the Housing Stability Support Initiative which would increase the rental subsidy for five years for those who are homeless.

The solution to homelessness is a home.

Acknowledgements

The Homeless Alliance of WNY facilitates strategic dialog to end homelessness in Erie, Genesee, Niagara, Orleans, and Wyoming Counties. Our community is as effective as it is in assisting the members of our community who have lost their housing because there is a strong spirit of collaboration. This report would be impossible without the enthusiastic assistance of so many agencies in the area.

Thank you to all agencies participating in HMIS, which include:

- Altamont Veterans Program
- Best Self Behavioral Health
- Buffalo City Missions
- Catholic Charities of Buffalo
- Cazenovia Recovery Systems
- Community Missions of the Niagara Frontier, Inc
- Compass House
- Eagle Star Emergency Housing
- Erie County Department of Mental Health
- Evergreen Health Services
- Family & Children's Service of Niagara
- Family Promise of WNY
- Gerard Place
- Jericho Road Community Health Centers
- Living Opportunities of DePaul
- Lt. Col. Matt Urban Human Services Center
- My Place Home (Temple of Christ)
- Niagara Gospel Rescue Mission
- Olmsted Center for Sight (WNY 211)
- Orleans County Department of Social Services

- Pathstone
- Restoration Society, Inc
- Salvation Army of Buffalo
- Saving Grace Ministries
- Spectrum Health Services
- Teaching and Restoring Youth
- Transitional Services, Inc
- United Church Home, Inc (Plymouth Crossroads)
- US Department of Veteran Affairs Healthcare for Homeless Veterans
- Veteran Outreach Center
- Veteran One-stop of Western New York
- YWCA of Niagara Frontier
- YWCA of Western New York

Thank you to all agencies who provided aggregate or de-identified client-level data to the Homeless Alliance, including:

- Back to Basics, Inc
- Erie County Department of Social Services
- Faith-Based Fellowship
- Genesee County Department of Social Services
- Haven House
- Little Portion Friary
- Lockport Cares
- Niagara County Department of Social Services
- Orleans County Department of Social Services
- Salvation Army of Genesee
- WINGS- God's Woman
- Wyoming County Department of Social Services
- YWCA of Niagara Frontier

Thank you to all of our partners in ending Veteran's Homelessness, especially the programs specifically serving veterans:

- The US Department of Veterans Affairs, Health Care for Homeless Veterans
- Altamont Veteran Program
- Buffalo City Mission
- Cazenovia Recovery Systems
- The Veteran One-Stop of WNY
- Veteran Outreach Center
- Pathstone
- The City of Buffalo
- The City of Niagara Falls
- The City of Tonawanda
- The City of Lockport

Thank you to everyone who participated in the BeCountedWNY effort, especially Nadia Pizarro of Best Self Behavioral Health for co-chairing the effort. It would not have been possible without the collaboration of all agencies involved:

- Compass House
- Casey House
- United Church Home (Plymouth Crossroads)
- Teaching and Restoring Youth
- Planned Parenthood of Central and Western New York
- ReNU Niagara
- Harvest House
- Youth Movement
- WNY Coalition for the Homeless
- Lt. Col. Matt Urban Human Services Center
- Lake Shore Behavioral Health
- St. Paul's Episcopal Church
- Restoration Society, Inc.

Most of all, thank you to all of the direct-service providers who give the time and labor to ensure that all people experiencing homelessness obtain a home. Homeless outreach workers are the guardian angels of our area. Thank you to advocates and policymakers who ensure there are enough resources to get the members of our community experiencing homelessness into housing. The only solution to homelessness is a home.