



FY2025

Homelessness Summary Brief

NY-508

Erie | Niagara | Genesee | Orleans | Wyoming Counties

Prepared by The Homeless Alliance of Western New York



2025 Homelessness Summary Brief

NY-508: Erie, Niagara, Genesee, Orleans, and Wyoming Counties

Introduction

This brief provides the total estimate of homelessness for the five counties within the NY-508 Continuum of Care, a breakdown of the number of people experiencing homelessness, detailed information about the people in the region who are/were experiencing homelessness, and reasons these community members lost their housing. Homelessness is one of the most difficult experiences a person can endure. It is our hope that the information in this brief can be used to inform our community about the extent of the homelessness crisis, dispel common misconceptions about people who experience homelessness, and recommend solutions to make homelessness rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The Homeless Alliance of Western New York (HAWNY) leads efforts to reduce homelessness in Erie, Niagara, Genesee, Orleans, and Wyoming Counties. As the region's designated Continuum of Care (CoC) lead agency, we collect vital data through the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), which tracks both government-funded and community-based homelessness services such as shelters, outreach programs, and housing initiatives.

In federal fiscal year 2025 (FY2025) a total of 8,602 people in our community faced the hardship of experiencing homelessness. While this is an 8.2% increase from FY2024, it is more practical to take a longitudinal approach to average out fluctuations. For example, compared to FY2023 this is only a 1.2% increase, since we saw a decrease between FY2023 and FY2024, continuing the overall upward trend of the past 5 years. Though the continued increase in the number of people experiencing homelessness is discouraging, it is important to look beyond only one piece of data. An extensive review of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) performance measures and the data in this report shows both progress and ongoing challenges, but overall data indicates that our homeless response system is a functional model, but the affordable housing crisis is making progress extremely difficult.

HUD System Performance Measures (SPM) from FY2025 show that the proportion of clients who are experiencing homelessness for the first time is increasing and is now up to 76.9%. Among all clients, 34% report that the primary reason they became homeless is eviction and the proportion of clients who had been living in a rental house, apartment, or owned their home immediately prior to losing their housing is 9.2%, both of which have increased from FY2024. Additionally, nearly half (49.5%) of Western New York (WNY) renters are spending 30% or more of their income on rent, which is defined by HUD as unaffordable.

The strain of more community members being priced out of housing in combination with the increased difficulty of finding affordable housing for the people already receiving services in our system has resulted in an increase of the average length of time that clients stay in a shelter. Despite these challenges, the rate at which clients



2025 Homelessness Summary Brief

NY-508: Erie, Niagara, Genesee, Orleans, and Wyoming Counties

returned to homelessness within 6 months of exiting to a permanent situation remained stable and exits to a permanent situation increased. As we continue to address homelessness, our commitment to securing affordable and sustainable housing remains unwavering.

The data on clients experiencing homelessness in this report was downloaded from HMIS on April 2, 2026, and includes all data from Transitional Housing, Emergency Shelter, Street Outreach, and Supportive Services Only projects that utilize HMIS. FY2025 is October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025. The HUD data for the length of time clients stayed in shelter, the rate at which clients returned to homelessness after exiting to a Permanent Situation, and the proportion of clients who exit to a Permanent Situation come from the FY2024 and FY2025 System Performance Measures for NY-508. Data about community demographics and rental costs come from the American Community Survey, 2020-2024 Five-Year Estimates.

Table of Contents

Introduction	2
Key Findings.....	5
Annual Counts of People Experiencing Homelessness	5
Duplication Rates	6
Demographics.....	6
Clients Served Over Time.....	6
Household Types Served Over Time	7
Household Type Distribution.....	7
Age Distribution.....	8
Race and Ethnicity Distribution	10
Gender Identity Distribution.....	12
Disability Status Distribution.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Disability Type Distribution	15
Special Populations	16
Special Populations Distribution	16
Gender Identity Distribution Among Special Populations.....	16
Age Distribution Among Special Populations.....	17
Prior Residence.....	17
Top Zip Codes of Last Permanent Residence	17
Top Previous Residence Types	19
Causes of Housing Loss	21
Top Primary Reason for Homelessness	21
Percent of Income Towards Rent.....	24
Exit Destination	25
Residence Type Upon Exit.....	25
Conclusion and Policy Recommendations.....	26
Acknowledgements	29
Appendix.....	31

Key Findings

Table 1: Count and Percent Change of People Experiencing Homelessness in NY-508 by County and Year

Region	FY2024 Totals		FY2025 Totals		% Change
	HMIS	Estimated Count	HMIS	Estimated Count	
NY-508	7054	7949	7741	8602	8.2%
Erie County	4963	5226	5794	6016	15.1%
Niagara County	1332	1954	1284	1906	-2.5%
Genesee County	285	313	293	324	3.5%
Orleans County	383	383	381	381	-0.5%
Wyoming County	90	90	83	81	0.3%

Note: Percent change calculated using the estimated count.

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 project type and county of operation in HMIS.

Table 2: Duplication Rate by Project Type and County
FY2025, NY-508

	Duplication Rate
Erie County Emergency Shelters	0.8126
Erie County Transitional Housing	0.9984
Overall Erie County	0.9384
Niagara County Emergency Shelters	0.8806
Niagara County Transitional Housing	1.0000
Overall Niagara County	0.9482
Genesee County Emergency Shelters	1.0000
Overall NY-508	0.9839

Note: Duplication rates are used to determine the likely duplication among non-HMIS participating providers and are based on data from HMIS participation providers.

Demographics

Who experienced homelessness?

- 971 families experienced homelessness in FY2025, continuing the upwards trend that began in FY2021. This year, 26.9% of all people who experienced homelessness were children.
- More than half of adults who experienced homelessness were aged 25-44.
- People who experience a disability are overrepresented in the homeless population. 46.7% of people experiencing homelessness are also experiencing a disability while only 14.3% of NY-508 residents experience a disability.

Figure 1: Number of Clients Served by NY-508 Over Time
FY2021-FY2025, NY-508

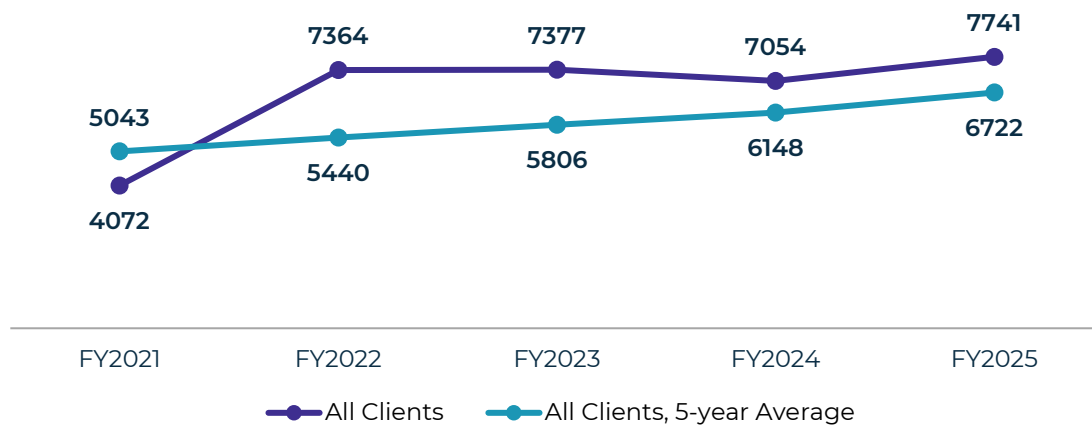
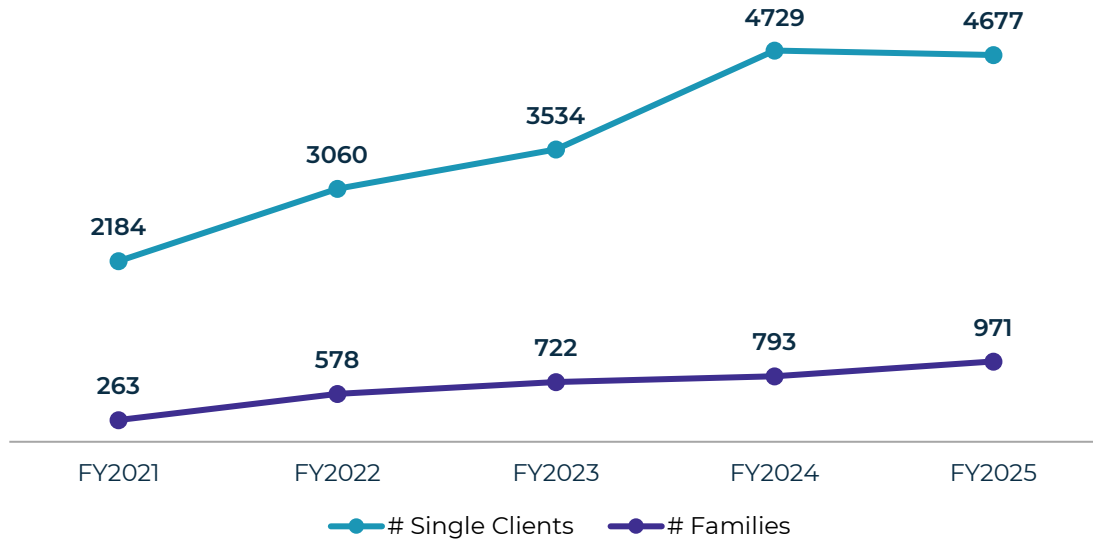


Figure 2: Household Type Served by NY-508 Over Time
FY2021-FY2025, NY-508



Note: In FY2022 only households with at least one adult and one child were considered Families.

Table 3: Household Type Distribution Among Households Served by NY-508
FY2025, NY-508

Household Type	Count of Households	% of Households
Single Clients	4677	82.8%
Families	971	17.2%
Couple with No Children	41	0.7%
Female Single Parent	724	12.8%
Male Single Parent	39	0.7%
Other	11	0.2%
Two Parent Family	156	2.8%
Grand Total	5648	100%

Note: 1 single client = 1 household (HH)

Table 4: Household Type Distribution Among Households Served by NY-508 by County

FY2025, Erie, Niagara, and GOW Counties

Household Type	Erie County		Niagara County		GOW Counties	
	Count of HH's	% of HH's	Count of HH's	% of HH's	Count of HH's	% of HH's
Single Clients	3566	83.3%	750	81.9%	463	82.7%
Families	713	16.7%	166	18.1%	97	17.3%
Couple with No Children	28	0.7%	-	-	-	-
Female Single Parent	550	12.9%	119	13.0%	59	10.5%
Male Single Parent	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-
Two Parent Family	100	2.3%	31	3.4%	26	4.6%
Grand Total	4279	100%	916	100%	560	100%

Note: 1 single client = 1 household (HH). The data for Male Single Parent and Other for Erie and Couple with No Children, Male Single Parent, and Other for Niagara and GOW Counties are suppressed due to small counts.

Figure 3: Age Distribution Among Clients Served by NY-508

FY2025, NY-508

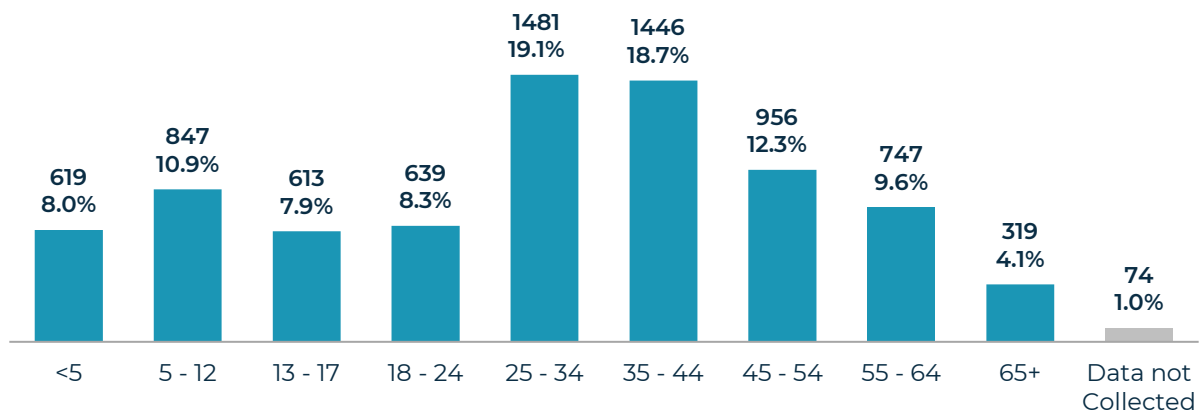
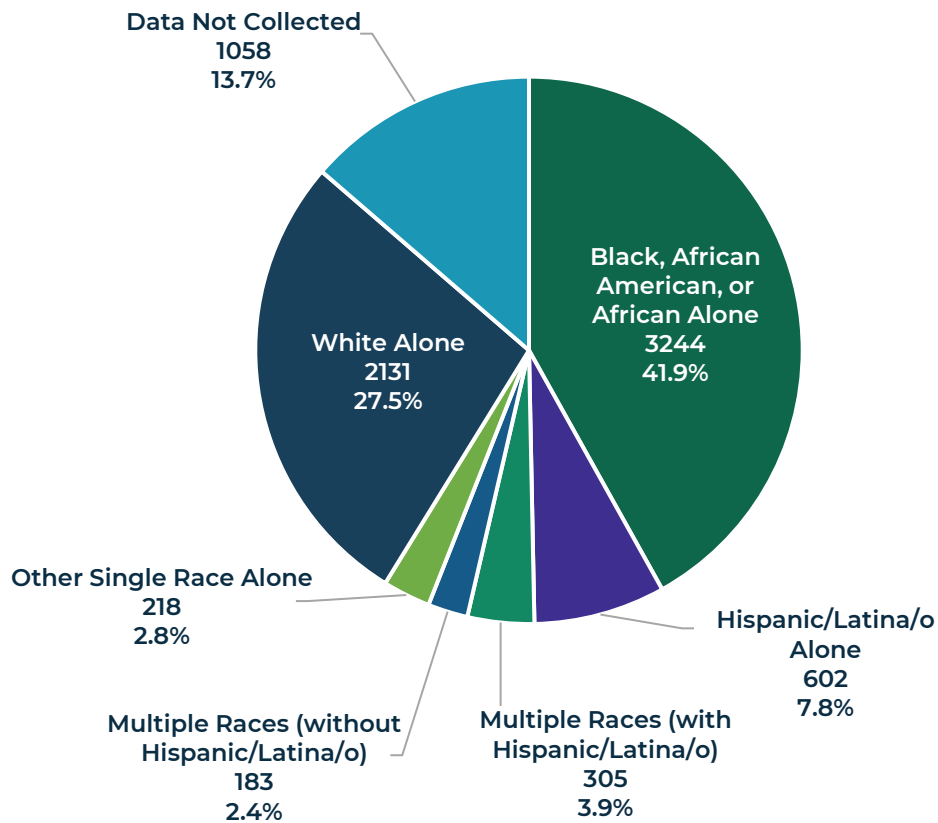


Table 5: Age Distribution Among Clients Served by NY-508 by County
FY2025, Erie, Niagara, and GOW Counties

Age	Erie County		Niagara County		GOW Counties	
	Count of Clients	% of Clients	Count of Clients	% of Clients	Count of Clients	% of Clients
<5	462	8.0%	104	8.1%	58	7.7%
5-12	625	10.9%	160	12.5%	63	8.4%
13-17	452	7.9%	121	9.4%	44	5.9%
All Children (under 18)	1539	26.9%	385	30.0%	165	21.9%
18-24	471	8.3%	118	9.2%	56	7.4%
25-34	1112	19.1%	209	16.3%	173	23.0%
35-44	1052	18.7%	242	18.8%	171	22.7%
45-54	708	12.3%	163	12.7%	97	12.9%
55-64	592	9.6%	121	9.4%	58	7.7%
65+	253	4.1%	40	3.1%	32	4.3%
All Adults (18 and Older)	4188	72.2%	893	69.5%	587	78.1%
Data Not Collected	67	1.0%	6	0.5%	0	0.0%

**Figure 4: Race and Ethnicity Distribution Among Clients Served by NY-508
FY2025, NY-508**



Note: Other Single Race Alone includes American Indian, Alaska Native, or Indigenous, Asian or Asian American, Middle Eastern or North African, and Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander.

Table 6: Comparison of Race Distribution Between People Who Experienced Homelessness and All Residents
FY2025, NY-508

Race	% of People Experiencing Homelessness	% of All NY-508 Residents
American Indian, Alaska Native, or Indigenous alone	1.3%	0.4%
Asian or Asian American alone	0.9%	3.9%
Black, African American, or African alone	48.5%	10.6%
Hispanic/Latina/o alone	9.0%	N/A
Middle Eastern or North African alone	0.8%	N/A
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander alone	0.3%	0.0%
Other Race	N/A	2.3%
White alone	31.9%	76.6%
Multiple Races	7.3%	6.2%

Note: Due to a difference of collection method, comparisons cannot be made for Hispanic/Latina/o, Middle Eastern or North African, or Other Race and comparisons for all other races are not exact. Clients whose Race and Ethnicity was not known are excluded from the People Who Experienced Homelessness calculation (n=6683).

Table 7: Comparison of Ethnicity Distribution Between People Who Experienced Homelessness and All Residents
FY2025, NY-508

Ethnicity	% of People Experiencing Homelessness	% of All NY-508 Residents
Hispanic/Latina/o	13.6%	5.8%
Non-Hispanic/Non-Latina/o	86.4%	94.2%

Note: Clients whose Race and Ethnicity was not known are excluded from the People Who Experienced Homelessness calculation (n=6683).

Table 8: Race and Ethnicity Distribution Among Clients Served by NY-508 by County

FY2025, Erie, Niagara, and GOW Counties

Race and Ethnicity	Erie County		Niagara County		GOW Counties	
	Count of Clients	% of Clients	Count of Clients	% of Clients	Count of Clients	% of Clients
Black, African American, or African Alone	2613	45.1%	516	40.2%	141	18.8%
Hispanic/Latina/o Alone	495	8.5%	90	7.0%	22	2.9%
White Alone	1141	19.7%	478	37.2%	555	74.0%
Other Single Race Alone*	158	2.7%	55	4.3	-	-
Multiple Races (with Hispanic/Latina/o)	250	4.3%	44	3.4%	13	1.7%
Multiple Races (without Hispanic/Latina/o)	132	2.3%	49	3.8%	-	-
Data Not Collected	1005	17.3%	52	4.0	-	-

*Other Single Race Alone includes American Indian, Alaska Native, or Indigenous, Asian or Asian American, Middle Eastern or North African, and Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander.

Note: The data for Other Single Race Alone, Multiple Races (without Hispanic/Latina/o), and Data Not Collected for GOW Counties are suppressed due to small counts.

Figure 5: Gender Identity Distribution Among Clients Served by NY-508 FY2025, NY-508

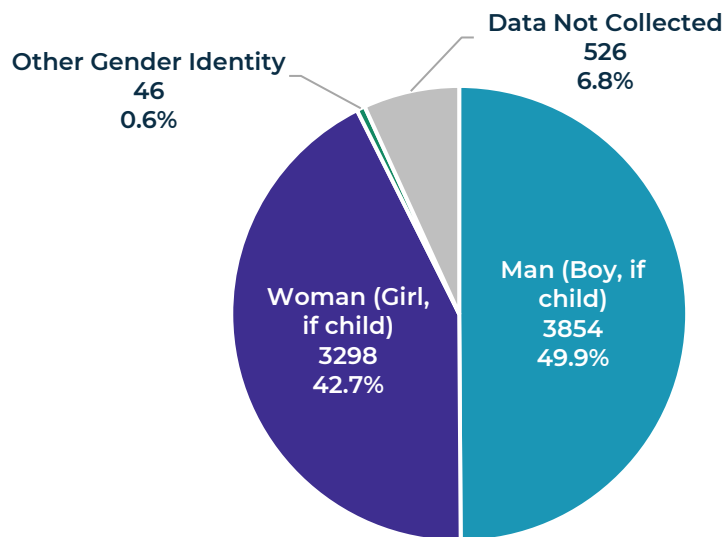


Table 9: Comparison of Gender Identity Distribution Between People Who Experienced Homelessness and All Residents
FY2025, NY-508

Gender Identity	% of People Experiencing Homelessness	% of All NY-508 Residents
Man (Boy, if child)	53.6%	49.0%
Woman (Girl, if child)	45.8%	51.0%
Other Gender Identity	0.6%	N/A

Note: Clients whose Gender Identity was not known are excluded from the People Who Experienced Homelessness calculation (n=7197).

Table 10: Gender Identity Distribution Among Clients Served by NY-508 by County
FY2025, Erie, Niagara, and GOW Counties

Gender Identity	Erie County		Niagara County		GOW Counties	
	Count of Clients	% of Clients	Count of Clients	% of Clients	Count of Clients	% of Clients
Man (Boy, if child)	2859	49.2%	650	50.7%	417	55.5%
Woman (Girl, if child)	2442	42.1%	610	47.6%	291	38.7%
Other Gender Identity	36	0.6%	-	-	-	-
Data Not Collected	470	8.1%	-	-	-	-

Note: The data for Other Gender Identity and Data Not Collected for Niagara and GOW counties are suppressed due to small counts.

Figure 6: Disability Status Distribution Among Clients Served by NY-508
FY2025, NY-508

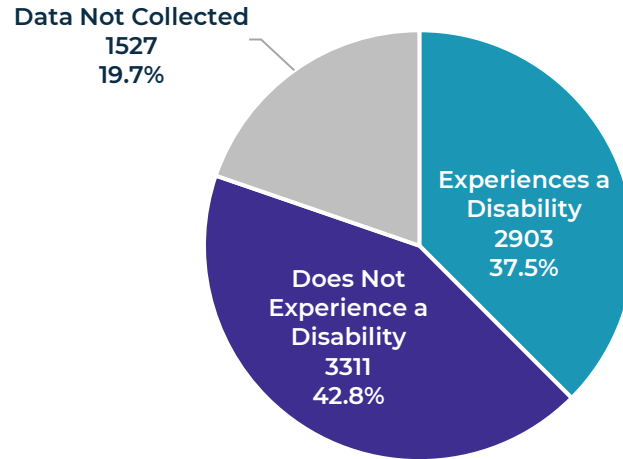


Table 11: Comparison of Disability Status Distribution between People Who Experienced Homelessness and All Residents
FY2025, NY-508

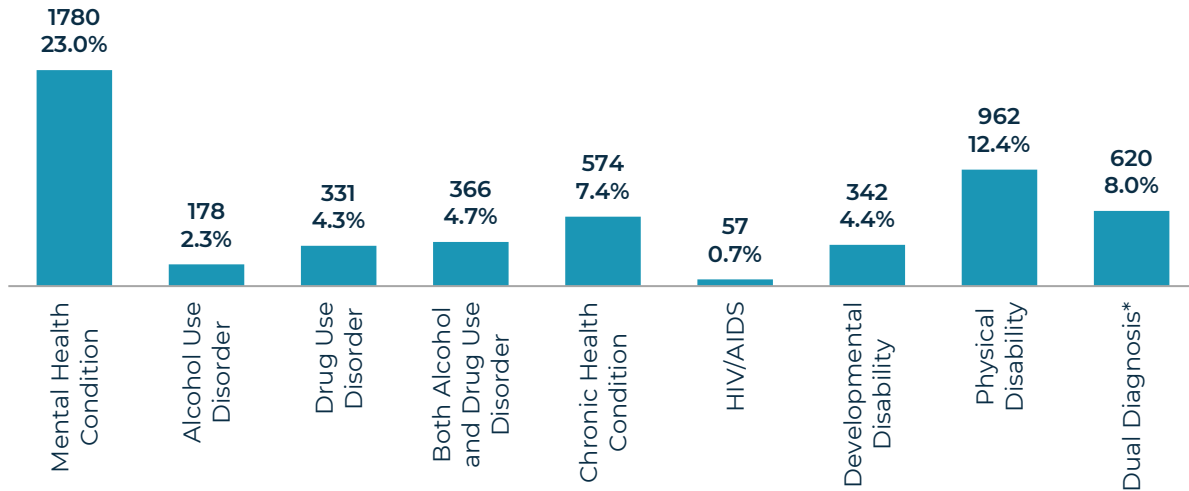
	% of People Experiencing Homelessness	% of All NY-508 Residents
Experience a Disability	46.7%	14.3%

Note: Clients whose Disability Status was not known are excluded from the People Who Experienced Homelessness calculation (n=6214).

Table 12: Disability Status Distribution Among Clients Served by NY-508 by County
FY2025, Erie, Niagara, and GOW Counties

Disability Status	Erie County		Niagara County		GOW Counties	
	Count of Clients	% of Clients	Count of Clients	% of Clients	Count of Clients	% of Clients
Experiences a Disability	2151	37.1%	523	40.7%	292	38.8%
Does Not Experience a Disability	2286	39.5%	736	57.3%	313	41.6%
Data Not Collected	1357	23.4%	25	1.9%	147	19.5%

**Figure 7: Disability Type Distribution Among Clients Served by NY-508
FY2025, NY-508**



*Dual Diagnosis refers to clients who experience both a mental health condition and a substance use disorder.

**Table 13: Disability Type Distribution Among Clients Served by NY-508
FY2025, Erie, Niagara, and GOW Counties**

Disability Type	Erie County		Niagara County		GOW Counties	
	Count of Clients	% of Clients	Count of Clients	% of Clients	Count of Clients	% of Clients
Mental Health Disorder	1440	24.9%	272	21.2%	107	14.2%
Alcohol Use Disorder	162	2.8%	20	1.6%	-	-
Drug Use Disorder	257	4.4%	60	4.7%	23	3.1%
Both Alcohol and Drug Use Disorder	319	5.5%	37	2.9%	16	2.1%
Chronic Health Condition	435	7.5%	140	10.9%	13	1.7%
HIV/AIDS	51	0.9%	-	-	-	-
Developmental Disability	281	4.8%	46	3.6%	21	2.8%
Physical Disability	815	14.1%	113	8.8%	60	8.0%
Dual Diagnosis*	541	9.3%	79	6.2%	22	2.9%

*Dual Diagnosis refers to clients who experience both a mental health condition and a substance use disorder.
Note: Columns will not sum to 100% as clients may experience multiple disability types or not experience any disability. The data for Alcohol Use Disorder for GOW and HIV/AIDS for Niagara and GOW counties are suppressed due to small counts.

Special Populations

What groups of people have unique needs?

Some individuals experiencing homelessness are more likely to have more severe service needs and are referred to as “Special Populations.” In NY-508 there are four main Special Populations: Chronically Homeless, Survivors of Domestic Violence, Veterans, and Youth*. Clients who meet the criteria for one or more of these special populations have access to resources designed specifically for their needs. Due to the extremely sensitive nature of information on clients who are youths or survivors of domestic violence, limited data is available for these special populations.

**See Table 31 in the Appendix for definitions*

Table 14: Special Populations Distribution Among Clients Served by NY-508
FY2025, NY-508

Special Population	Count of Clients	% of Clients
Chronically Homeless	446	5.8%
Survivor of Domestic Violence	843	10.9%
Veteran	233	3.0%
Youth	765	9.9%

Note: Columns may not sum to 100% as clients may meet criteria for multiple Special Populations or not meet criteria for any Special Population.

Figure 8: Gender Identity Distribution Among Special Population Clients Served by NY-508
FY2025, NY-508

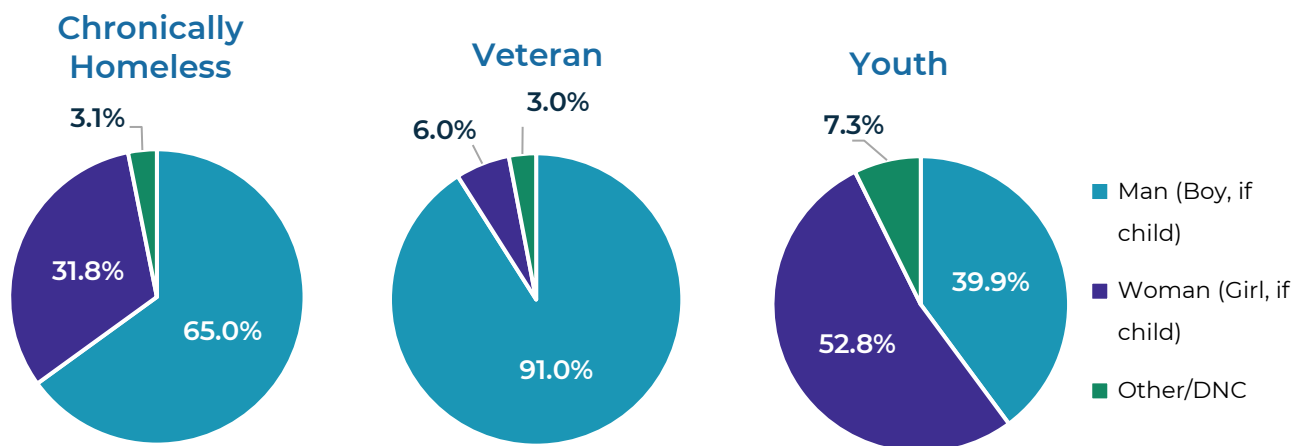
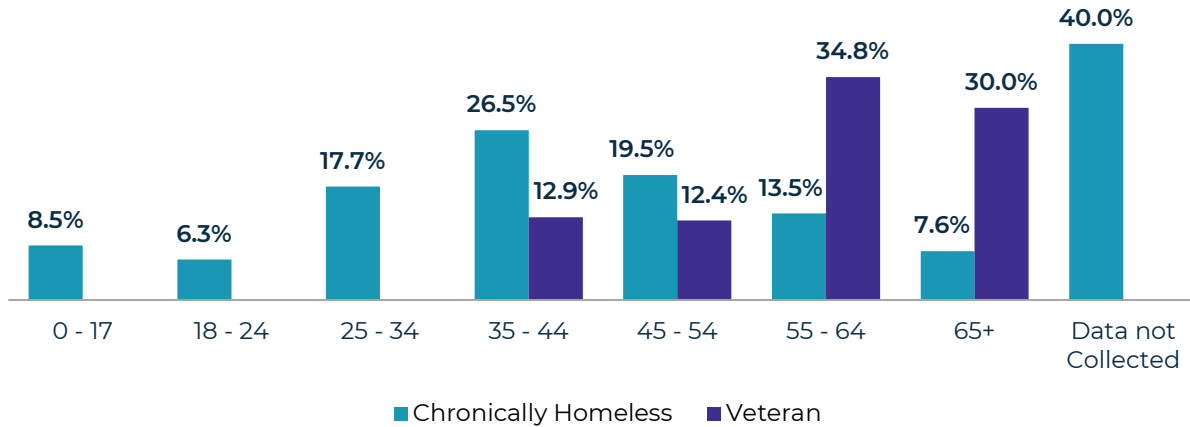


Figure 9: Age Distribution Among Special Population Clients Served by NY-508

FY2025, NY-508



Note: The denominators for the percentage calculations are the number of Chronically Homeless (n=446) and the number of Veterans (n=233). The data for Veterans 18-24 and 25-34 are suppressed due to small counts.

Prior Residence

Where were people living before losing their housing?

- 21.3% of clients reported that their last permanent address was in the East Side, Kensington, and Schiller Park areas of Buffalo.
- The proportion of clients who had been living in a place not meant for habitation increased in Erie County but decreased in all other counties between FY2024 and FY2025.
- The proportion of clients who had been living in a rental house or apartment (with or without a housing subsidy) or owned their home increased from 8.5% to 9.2% between FY2024 and FY2025, an increase of 8.2%.

Table 15: Top Ten Zip Codes for the Last Permanent Residence Among Clients Served by NY-508

FY2025, NY-508

Zip Code of Last Permanent Address	% of Clients	Zip Code of Last Permanent Address	% of Clients
14215	12.6%	14207	3.6%
14211	8.7%	14212	3.6%
14020	4.2%	14208	3.2%
14206	3.7%	14213	3.2%
14301	3.6%	14214	3.0%

Note: Clients whose Zip Code of Last Permanent Address was not known are excluded from the calculation (n=4577). The Zip Code of Last Permanent Address is provided by the Head of Household upon their first entry into a NY-508 Service Provider during FY2025.

Table 16: Top Ten Zip Codes for the Last Permanent Residence Among Clients Served by NY-508
FY2025, Erie County

Zip Code of Last Permanent Address	% of Clients	Zip Code of Last Permanent Address	% of Clients
14215	15.8%	14208	4.1%
14211	11.0%	14213	4.0%
14212	4.5%	14214	3.7%
14206	4.5%	14201	2.8%
14207	4.4%	14204	2.7%

Note: Clients whose Zip Code of Last Permanent Address was not known are excluded from the calculation (n=3543). The Zip Code of Last Permanent Address is provided by the Head of Household upon their first entry into an Erie County Service Provider during FY2025.

Table 17: Top Ten Zip Codes for the Last Permanent Residence Among Clients Served by NY-508
FY2025, Niagara County

Zip Code of Last Permanent Address	% of Clients	Zip Code of Last Permanent Address	% of Clients
14301	20.3%	14120	5.1%
14305	14.0%	14215	2.7%
14304	8.8%	14150	2.0%
14303	7.4%	14201	1.5%
14094	5.4%	14206	1.5%

Note: Clients whose Zip Code of Last Permanent Address was not known are excluded from the calculation (n=743). The Zip Code of Last Permanent Address is provided by the Head of Household upon their first entry into a Niagara County Service Provider during FY2025.

Table 18: Top Six Zip Codes for the Last Permanent Residence Among Clients Served by NY-508
FY2025, Genesee, Orleans, and Wyoming Counties

Zip Code of Last Permanent Address	% of Clients	Zip Code of Last Permanent Address	% of Clients
14020	48.3%	14530	5.2%
14411	9.3%	14103	3.4%
14569	6.2%	14125	2.8%

Note: Clients whose Zip Code of Last Permanent Address was not known are excluded from the calculation (n=387). The Zip Code of Last Permanent Address is provided by the Head of Household upon their first entry into a GOW Service Provider during FY2025.

Table 19: Top Ten Previous Residence Types Among Clients Served by NY-508
FY2025, NY-508

Residence Prior to Project Entry	Count of Clients	% of Clients
Emergency shelter, including hotel or motel paid for with emergency shelter voucher	1268	30.0%
Place not meant for habitation	744	17.6%
Staying or living in a family member's room, apartment or house	588	13.9%
Staying or living in a friend's room, apartment or house	546	12.9%
Rental by client, no ongoing housing subsidy	322	7.6%
Jail, prison, or juvenile detention facility	252	6.0%
Hospital or other residential non-psychiatric medical facility	109	2.6%
Hotel or motel paid for without emergency shelter voucher	105	2.5%
Substance use treatment facility or detox center	98	2.3%
Psychiatric hospital or other psychiatric facility	51	1.2%

Note: Clients whose Prior Residence Type was not known are excluded from the calculation (n=4233). The Prior Residence Type is provided by the Head of Household upon their first entry into a NY-508 Service Provider during FY2025.

Table 20: Top Ten Previous Residence Types Among Clients Served by NY-508
FY2025, Erie County

Residence Prior to Project Entry	Count of Clients	% of Clients
Emergency shelter, including hotel or motel paid for with emergency shelter voucher	975	34.9%
Place not meant for habitation	547	19.6%
Staying or living in a family member's room, apartment or house	353	12.6%
Staying or living in a friend's room, apartment or house	321	11.5%
Rental by client, no ongoing housing subsidy	192	6.9%
Jail, prison, or juvenile detention facility	96	3.4%
Hospital or other residential non-psychiatric medical facility	81	2.9%
Substance use treatment facility or detox center	68	2.4%
Hotel or motel paid for without emergency shelter voucher	40	1.4%
Rental by client, with ongoing housing subsidy	33	1.2%

Note: Clients whose Prior Residence Type was not known are excluded from the calculation (n=2795). The Prior Residence Type is provided by the Head of Household upon their first entry into an Erie County Service Provider during FY2025.

Table 21: Top Ten Previous Residence Types Among Clients Served by NY-508

FY2025, Niagara County

Residence Prior to Project Entry	Count of Clients	% of Clients
Emergency shelter, including hotel or motel paid for with emergency shelter voucher	224	24.1%
Place not meant for habitation	149	16.0%
Staying or living in a friend's room, apartment or house	147	15.8%
Staying or living in a family member's room, apartment or house	141	15.2%
Rental by client, no ongoing housing subsidy	79	8.5%
Jail, prison, or juvenile detention facility	57	6.1%
Hotel or motel paid for without emergency shelter voucher	36	3.9%
Hospital or other residential non-psychiatric medical facility	26	2.8%
Psychiatric hospital or other psychiatric facility	16	1.7%
Substance use treatment facility or detox center	14	1.5%

Note: Clients whose Prior Residence Type was not known are excluded from the calculation (n=930). The Prior Residence Type is provided by the Head of Household upon their first entry into a Niagara County Service Provider during FY2025.

Table 22: Top Ten Previous Residence Types Among Clients Served by NY-508

FY2025, Genesee, Orleans, and Wyoming Counties

Residence Prior to Project Entry	Count of Clients	% of Clients
Staying or living in a family member's room, apartment or house	106	18.4%
Jail, prison, or juvenile detention facility	96	16.6%
Emergency shelter, including hotel or motel paid for with emergency shelter voucher	86	14.9%
Staying or living in a friend's room, apartment or house	86	14.9%
Place not meant for habitation	70	12.1%
Rental by client, no ongoing housing subsidy	48	8.3%
Hotel or motel paid for without emergency shelter voucher	30	5.2%
Substance use treatment facility or detox center	19	3.3%
Psychiatric hospital or other psychiatric facility	10	1.7%
Owned by client, no ongoing housing subsidy	8	1.4%

Note: Clients whose Prior Residence Type was not known are excluded from the calculation (n=577). The Prior Residence Type is provided by the Head of Household upon their first entry into a GOW Counties Service Provider during FY2025.

Causes of Housing Loss

Why did people experience homelessness?

- The proportion of clients who reported that Domestic Violence (DV) is the primary reason they lost their housing continued to increase from previous years. In NY-508 it increased from 9.5% to 12.8% between FY2024 and FY2025, an increase of 34.5%.
- The proportion of clients who reported that an informal eviction is the primary reason they lost their housing increased from 20.7% to 23.4% between FY2024 and FY2025, an increase of 12.7%.
- The proportion of clients who reported that a mental health condition is the primary reason for losing their housing decreased from 4.4% to 3.2% between FY2024 and FY2025, a decrease of 28.3%.

Table 23: Top Ten Primary Reason for Homelessness Clients Served by NY-508
FY2025, NY-508

Primary Reason for Homelessness	Count of Clients	% of Clients
Eviction - Informal (asked/told/pressured to leave, etc.)	1065	23.4%
Domestic Violence or Abuse (DV)	581	12.8%
Relocation from out of the NY-508 CoC Area	552	12.1%
Eviction - Court Ordered	481	10.6%
Household Dispute (not DV)	401	8.8%
Release from Institution	394	8.7%
Loss of Job/Income (includes public benefits)	362	8.0%
Building or Location Unsafe for Habitation	218	4.8%
Substance Use	154	3.4%
Mental Health	145	3.2%

Note: Clients whose Primary Reason for Homelessness was not known are excluded from the calculation (n=4556). The Primary Reason for Homelessness is provided by the Head of Household upon their first entry into a NY-508 Service Provider during FY2025.

Table 24: Top Ten Primary Reason for Homelessness Clients Served by NY-508

FY2025, Erie County

Primary Reason for Homelessness	Count of Clients	% of Clients
Eviction - Informal (asked/told/pressured to leave, etc.)	719	21.1%
Domestic Violence or Abuse (DV)	519	15.2%
Relocation from out of the NY-508 CoC Area	489	14.4%
Eviction - Court Ordered	367	10.8%
Household Dispute (not DV)	337	9.9%
Loss of Job/Income (includes public benefits)	281	8.3%
Release from Institution	158	4.6%
Building or Location Unsafe for Habitation	152	4.5%
Mental Health	119	3.5%
Substance Use	98	2.9%

Note: Clients whose Primary Reason for Homelessness was not known are excluded from the calculation (n=3406). The Primary Reason for Homelessness is provided by the Head of Household upon their first entry into an Erie County Service Provider during FY2025.

Table 25: Top Ten Primary Reason for Homelessness Clients Served by NY-508

FY2025, Niagara County

Primary Reason for Homelessness	Count of Clients	% of Clients
Release from Institution	120	21.6%
Eviction - Informal (asked/told/pressured to leave, etc.)	90	16.2%
Loss of Job/Income (includes public benefits)	72	13.0%
Relocation from out of the NY-508 CoC Area	53	9.5%
Household Dispute (not DV)	52	9.4%
Eviction - Court Ordered	38	6.8%
Domestic Violence or Abuse (DV)	34	6.1%
Building or Location Unsafe for Habitation	31	5.6%
Mental Health	24	4.3%
Problems with building	22	4.0%

Note: Clients whose Primary Reason for Homelessness was not known are excluded from the calculation (n=556). The Primary Reason for Homelessness is provided by the Head of Household upon their first entry into a Niagara County Service Provider during FY2025.

Table 26: Top Ten Primary Reason for Homelessness Clients Served by NY-508

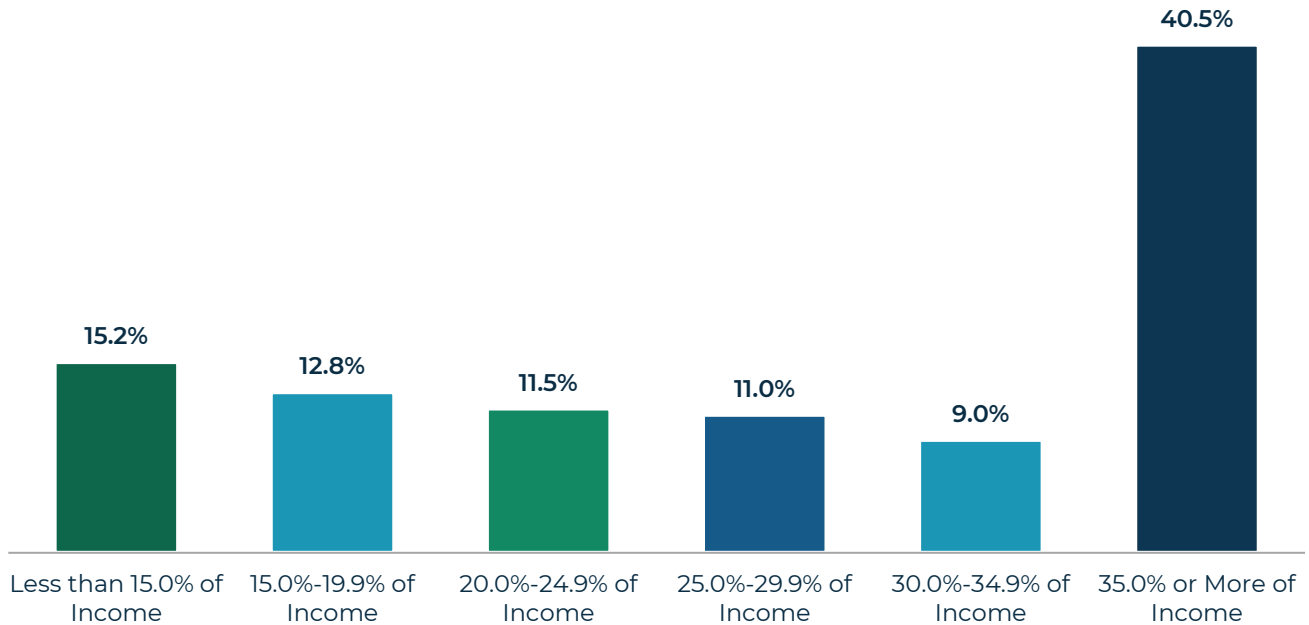
FY2025, Genesee, Orleans, and Wyoming Counties

Primary Reason for Homelessness	Count of Clients	% of Clients
Eviction - Informal (asked/told/pressured to leave, etc.)	270	39.3%
Release from Institution	120	17.5%
Eviction - Court Ordered	85	12.4%
Building or Location Unsafe for Habitation	39	5.7%
Substance Use	38	5.5%
Domestic Violence or Abuse (DV)	34	5.0%
Relocation from out of the NY-508 CoC Area	24	3.5%
Loss of job/income (includes public benefits)	23	3.4%
Household Dispute (not DV)	19	2.8%
Doubled-up/Overcrowded	11	1.6%

Note: Clients whose Primary Reason for Homelessness was not known are excluded from the calculation (n=687). The Primary Reason for Homelessness is provided by the Head of Household upon their first entry into a GOW Counties Service Provider during FY2025.

The figure and table below reflect data from the American Community Survey, 2020-2024 Five Year Estimates.

Figure 10: Percent of Income Towards Rent Distribution Among Residents
2020-2024 Average, NY-508



Note: Residents that the American Community Survey reported were unable to have their Percent of Income Towards Rent computed are excluded from the calculation.

Table 27: Percent of Income Towards Rent Distribution Among Residents
2020-2024 Average, Erie, Niagara, and GOW Counties

Percent of Income Towards Rent	Erie County	Niagara County	GOW Counties
Less than 15.0 percent	22.3%	15.5%	18.1%
15.0 to 19.9 percent	12.4%	14.0%	15.3%
20.0 to 24.9 percent	11.6%	9.9%	13.3%
25.0 to 29.9 percent	10.8%	12.0%	10.8%
30.0 to 34.9 percent	9.0%	9.2%	7.9%
35.0 percent or more	41.3%	39.5%	34.6%

Note: Residents that the American Community Survey reported were unable to have their Percent of Income Towards Rent computed are excluded from the calculation.

Exit Destination

When people exit the system, where do they go?

The proportion of clients experiencing homelessness who exited the system to permanent housing increased between FY2024 and FY2025, despite a higher number of people experiencing homelessness overall. Case managers and other homeless services providers work tirelessly to find safe, affordable, and stable housing for their clients, but the lack of affordable housing options continues to perpetuate and worsen this crisis. Low-income community members are unable to afford housing and fall into homelessness faster than our homelessness response system can stabilize and house them.

Table 28: Residence Type Upon Exit Distribution Among Clients Served by NY-508

FY2025, NY-508

Exit Destination Type*	Count of Leavers	% of Leavers
Permanent	1694	28.9%
Temporary	520	8.9%
Institution	134	2.3%
Homeless	784	13.4%
Other/Unknown	2729	46.6%

Note: The denominator for the percent calculation is the number of clients who exited a NY-508 Service Provider during FY2025 (n=5861).

**See Table 32 in the Appendix for definitions*

Table 29: Residence Type Upon Exit Distribution Among Clients Served by NY-508

FY2025, Erie, Niagara, and GOW Counties

Exit Destination Type*	Erie County		Niagara County		GOW Counties	
	Count of Leavers	% of Leavers	Count of Leavers	% of Leavers	Count of Leavers	% of Leavers
Permanent	1165	27.5%	329	29.2%	208	35.0%
Temporary	319	7.5%	136	12.1%	73	12.3%
Institution	74	1.7%	37	3.3%	-	-
Homeless	742	17.5%	74	6.6%	-	-
Other/Unknown	1941	45.8%	551	48.9%	285	47.9%

Note: The denominator for the percent calculation for each county is the number of clients who exited a NY-508 Service Provider during FY2025. Erie (n=4241), Niagara (n=1127), and GOW (n=595). The data for Institution and Homeless for GOW are suppressed due to small counts.

**See Table 32 in the Appendix for definitions*

Conclusion and Policy Recommendations

The findings in this report reinforce a clear message: while the homeless response system in Western New York continues to improve outcomes for people experiencing homelessness, the region's affordable housing shortage is driving more households into homelessness than the system can permanently resolve. During FY2025, an estimated **8,602 people experienced homelessness**, an increase from the previous year. Notably, **76.9% of people entering the homeless response system were experiencing homelessness for the first time**, demonstrating that housing instability is affecting an increasing number of households who previously maintained stable housing. At the same time, **34% of clients reported eviction as the primary reason they became homeless**, and nearly **half (49.5%) of Western New York renters are housing cost-burdened**, spending more than 30% of their income toward housing.

Despite these challenges, the data also demonstrates that the region's homeless response system remains effective. Permanent housing exits increased while returns to homelessness remained stable, indicating that providers continue to help people successfully regain housing. However, without a significant increase in affordable housing and supportive services, more households will continue to enter homelessness while those already experiencing homelessness will remain in shelters longer due to limited housing options.

These findings demonstrate that ending homelessness requires both expanding affordable housing for households at risk of homelessness and increasing supportive housing for individuals and families who require ongoing services to maintain long-term housing stability.

Expand the Supply of Affordable Housing

The most effective long-term strategy for reducing homelessness is increasing the supply of affordable housing. Local, state, and federal partners should prioritize the development and preservation of housing that is affordable to extremely low-income households, expand incentives for affordable housing development, and reduce barriers that limit housing production. Increasing affordable housing availability will reduce the number of households entering homelessness while improving the ability of service providers to quickly move people from shelters into permanent housing.

Strengthen Homelessness Prevention

Preventing homelessness before it occurs has become increasingly important, especially considering that three-quarters of people experiencing homelessness are facing this experience for the first time. Expanding eviction prevention programs, emergency rental assistance, landlord mediation, legal representation for tenants, and flexible financial assistance can help households remain stably housed. Preventing homelessness is not only more effective for families but also significantly less costly than responding after a housing crisis has occurred.

Expand Housing Navigation and Landlord Partnerships

Increasing the supply of affordable housing is essential, but improving access to existing housing opportunities is equally important. Expanding housing navigation services, landlord recruitment and incentive programs, security deposit and move-in assistance, tenancy support, and flexible funding can help households secure available housing more quickly. Strengthening partnerships with private landlords, public housing authorities, and housing developers will reduce the amount of time people remain in shelters while improving permanent housing outcomes and creating a more efficient homeless response system.

Expand Permanent Supportive Housing

While affordable housing is the greatest overall need, many individuals experiencing homelessness require permanent supportive housing combined with ongoing services to successfully maintain housing. FY2025 data illustrates the scope of this need:

Population	Individuals Served
People experiencing a mental health disorder	1,952
People experiencing a substance use disorder	996
Adults age 55 and older	1,046
Survivors of domestic violence	883
Youth ages 18–24	747
People experiencing chronic homelessness	520
Veterans	288

These populations overlap and should not be summed. Together, they demonstrate the substantial need for supportive housing and specialized services throughout the region.

Expanding permanent supportive housing with voluntary wraparound services—including behavioral healthcare, substance use treatment, case management, employment assistance, recovery supports, and connections to mainstream



2025 Homelessness Summary Brief

NY-508: Erie, Niagara, Genesee, Orleans, and Wyoming Counties

benefits—will improve housing stability for individuals with the greatest barriers while reducing reliance on emergency shelters and other crisis systems.

Increase Access to Behavioral Health Services

Behavioral health challenges remain a significant factor for many people experiencing homelessness. Increasing access to community-based mental health care, substance use treatment, crisis response services, and recovery supports should remain a priority.

Continue Investing in an Effective Homeless Response System

As homelessness continues to rise due to broader housing market conditions, sustained investment in emergency shelters, street outreach, coordinated entry, rapid rehousing, diversion, and homelessness prevention programs remains essential. In FY2025 we saw 4,301 people experience Long Term Homelessness, which is a measure of people who experience homelessness for more than 92 days within our CoC. These programs provide the critical safety net that helps households quickly regain stability while broader housing solutions are developed.

Strengthening Regional Partnerships

Ending homelessness requires coordinated action across housing authorities, local governments, healthcare providers, behavioral health systems, schools, veterans' organizations, domestic violence providers, workforce development agencies, landlords, community organizations, and people with lived experience of homelessness. Continued collaboration, data sharing, coordinated planning, and shared investment strategies will maximize available resources and create a stronger regional response to homelessness.

Looking Ahead

Homelessness cannot be solved by homeless service providers alone. The data in this report demonstrates that Western New York's homeless response system continues to improve outcomes despite increasing demand. However, the affordable housing crisis is outpacing those gains by pushing more households into homelessness than the system can permanently house. By expanding affordable housing, strengthening homelessness prevention, improving access to existing housing opportunities, increasing permanent supportive housing, investing in behavioral health services, and continuing collaborative regional planning, our community can move closer to ensuring that homelessness becomes **rare, brief, and non-recurring**.



2025 Homelessness Summary Brief

NY-508: Erie, Niagara, Genesee, Orleans, and Wyoming Counties

Acknowledgements

The Homeless Alliance of WNY facilitates strategic dialog to end homelessness in Erie, Genesee, Niagara, Orleans, and Wyoming Counties. Our community is effective 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.

Of course, these agencies could not operate without the dedicated direct-service providers who give their time and labor to our community members when they are actively experiencing the challenges associated with losing their housing. These staff provide critical, immediate support and guidance for clients as they begin to navigate our homeless response system. Thank you for all that you do.

Thank you to all agencies participating in HMIS whose data is included in this report:

- Altamont Veterans Program
- Back to Basics
- BestSelf Behavioral Health
- Buffalo City Mission
- Community Missions of the Niagara Frontier, Inc.
- Compass House
- Cornerstone
- Eagle Star Emergency Housing
- Eastgate Mission
- Erie County Department of Mental Health
- Erie County Department of Social Services
- Family Promise of WNY
- Friends of Night People
- Genesee County Department of Social Services
- Heart, Love & Soul
- Hudson House
- Jericho Road Community Health Centers
- Little Portion Friary
- Lt. Col. Matt Urban Human Services Center
- Ministry of Concern Orleans County
- My Place Home (Temple of Christ)
- Niagara County Department of Social Services
- Orleans County Department of Social Services
- Peaceprints of WNY
- Pinnacle Community Services
- Salvation Army of Buffalo
- Saving Grace Ministries
- Sylvia's House
- Transitional Services, Inc
- Twin Cities Task Force



2025 Homelessness Summary Brief

NY-508: Erie, Niagara, Genesee, Orleans, and Wyoming Counties

- United Church Home
- Wyoming County Department of Social Services

Thank you to all agencies who provided aggregate counts to the Homeless Alliance for the NY-508 estimates:

- Child and Family Services Haven House
- Faith Based Fellowship
- Family & Children's Services
- Genesee County YWCA
- Lockport CARES
- Niagara Gospel Mission
- PathStone Corporation
- Pinnacle Community Services
- WINGS- God's Woman
- YWCA Niagara

Appendix

American Community Survey (ACS): A survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau every non-census year that collects detailed social, economic, housing, and demographic information from a sample of households across the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

Client: An individual who has or is currently experiencing homelessness and was or is receiving services from a NY-508 Service Provider.

Continuum of Care (CoC): A community with a unified plan to organize and deliver housing and services to meet the specific needs of people who are homeless as they move to stable housing and maximize self-sufficiency.

Disability: A diagnosable substance use disorder, serious mental illness, developmental disability, or chronic physical illness that is expected to be of long-continuing or indefinite duration that substantially impairs the person's ability to live independently.

DNC: An abbreviation for Data Not Collected, indicating that a piece of information was not collected from the client.

Emergency Shelter (ES): ES are any facility, the primary purpose of which is to provide temporary or transitional shelter for the homeless in general or for specific populations of the homeless.

HOPWA: An abbreviation for Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS, a Federal program dedicated to the housing needs of people living with HIV/AIDS.

Household: All the people who occupy, or will occupy, a housing unit. A household includes the related family members and all the unrelated people, if any, who share, or will share, the housing unit. A person living alone in a housing unit is counted as a household.

Leavers: Clients who stopped receiving services from any NY-508 Service Provider during FY2025.

NY-508: The HUD designation for the Western New York CoC, the cities of Buffalo and Niagara Falls and Erie, Niagara, Genesee, Orleans, and Wyoming counties.

PH: An abbreviation for Permanent Housing.

Street Outreach (SO): SO activities are designed to meet the immediate needs of people experiencing homelessness in unsheltered locations by connecting them with emergency shelter, housing, or critical services, and providing them with urgent, non-facility-based care.

Supportive Services Only (SSO): SSO projects provide supportive services, such as conducting outreach to sheltered and unsheltered homeless persons and families and providing referrals to housing or other necessary services to families and individuals experiencing homelessness. These projects do not provide housing or housing assistance.

System Performance Measures (SPM): An annual report produced by HUD that provides a comprehensive understanding of community performance in relation to preventing and ending homelessness.

Transitional Housing (TH): TH provides temporary housing with supportive services to individuals and families experiencing homelessness with the goal of interim stability and support to successfully move to and maintain permanent housing.

Table 30: Special Populations Definitions/Criteria

Population	Definition/Criteria
Chronically Homeless	An individual with a disability who has been homeless for at least 12 consecutive months or has been homeless on at least 4 separate occasions in the last 3 years and the combined time homeless equals at least 12 months.
Survivor of Domestic Violence	An individual who has previously or is currently experiencing domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence or stalking.
Veteran	An individual who has ever been on active duty in the armed forces of the United States.
Youth	An individual between the ages of 12 and 24 alone or in a household with no members over age 24.

Note: Definitions/Criteria are summarized.

Table 31: Residence Type Upon Exit Definitions

Exit Destination Type Specifics				
Permanent	Temporary	Institution	Homeless	Other/Unknown
Staying or living with family or friends (permanent tenure)	Transitional housing for homeless persons	Foster care home or foster care group home	Place not meant for habitation	No exit interview completed
Moved from one HOPWA funded project to HOPWA PH	Residential project or halfway house with no homeless criteria	Hospital or other residential non-psychiatric medical facility	Emergency shelter, including hotel or motel paid for with emergency shelter voucher, Host Home shelter	Other
Rental by client (in public housing or with or without subsidy or voucher)	Hotel or motel paid for without emergency shelter voucher	Jail, prison, or juvenile detention facility	Safe Haven	Deceased
Owned by client (with or without subsidy)	Host Home (non-crisis)	Long-term care facility or nursing home		Client Doesn't Know/ Prefers Not to Answer
	Staying or living with family or friends (temporary tenure)	Psychiatric hospital or other psychiatric facility		Data Not Collected
	Moved from one HOPWA funded project to HOPWA TH	Substance use treatment facility or detox center		