



# FY2023 Homelessness Summary Brief

**Niagara County**

Prepared by The Homeless Alliance of Western New York



## 2023 Homelessness Summary Brief

Niagara County

### Introduction

*Homelessness is one of the most difficult experiences a person can endure. This brief provides detailed information about the people in Niagara County who are/were experiencing homelessness as well as the reasons they lost their housing.*

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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), 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.

Homelessness is rising across the entire CoC, with Niagara County experiencing the largest increase. In fiscal year 2023, 1,241 people in Niagara County lost their housing, a 33.8% increase from the previous year, which included a 28.4% rise in Youth Homelessness and a 44.0% increase in clients who have experienced domestic violence. Despite the growing numbers, the primary reasons people become homeless have remained largely consistent, there was a decrease in clients that report experiencing a disability, and a 34.2% decrease in Chronic Homelessness. In the upcoming years, our efforts to understand and address homelessness will continue, as we work toward securing more affordable and sustainable housing for everyone in our community.

The data on clients experiencing homelessness in this report was downloaded from HMIS on November 11, 2023, and includes all data from Transitional Housing, Emergency Shelter, Street Outreach, and Supportive Services Only projects that utilize HMIS. FY2023 is October 1, 2022 – September 30, 2023. Data about community demographics and rental costs come from the American Community Survey, 2018-2022 Five Year Estimates.



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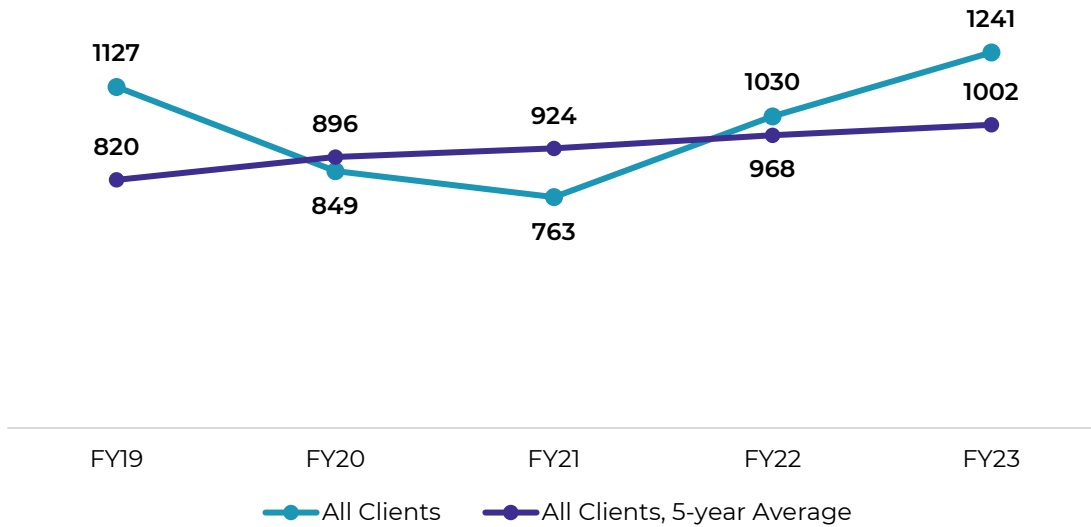
Niagara County

## Demographics

### Who experienced homelessness?

- 80.8% of households who experienced homelessness were one-person households.
- 35.7% of people who experienced homelessness were aged 25-44.
- People who experience a disability are overrepresented in the homeless population.

**Figure 1: Number of Clients Served by NY-508 Over Time**  
FY2019-FY2023, Niagara County

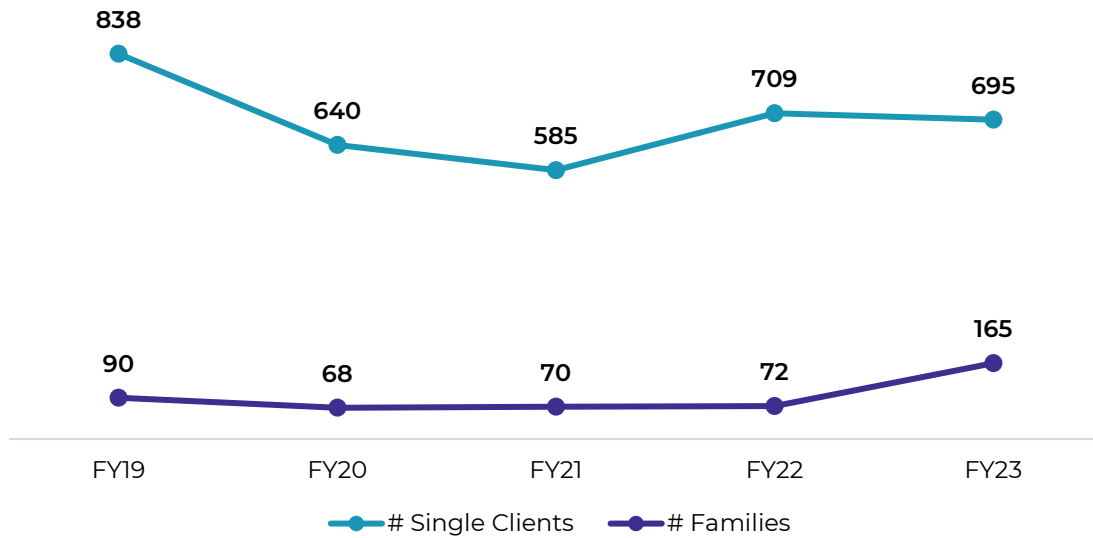


**Table 1: Household Type Distribution Among Clients Served by NY-508**  
FY2023, Niagara County

Household Type	Count of Households	% of Households
<b>Single Clients</b>	<b>695</b>	<b>80.8%</b>
<b>Families</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>19.2%</b>
Couple with No Children	8	0.9%
Female Single Parent	111	12.9%
Male Single Parent	14	1.6%
Other	3	0.3%
Two Parent Family	29	3.4%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>860</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Note: 1 single client = 1 household*

**Figure 2: Household Type Served by NY-508 Over Time**  
FY2019-FY2023, Niagara County

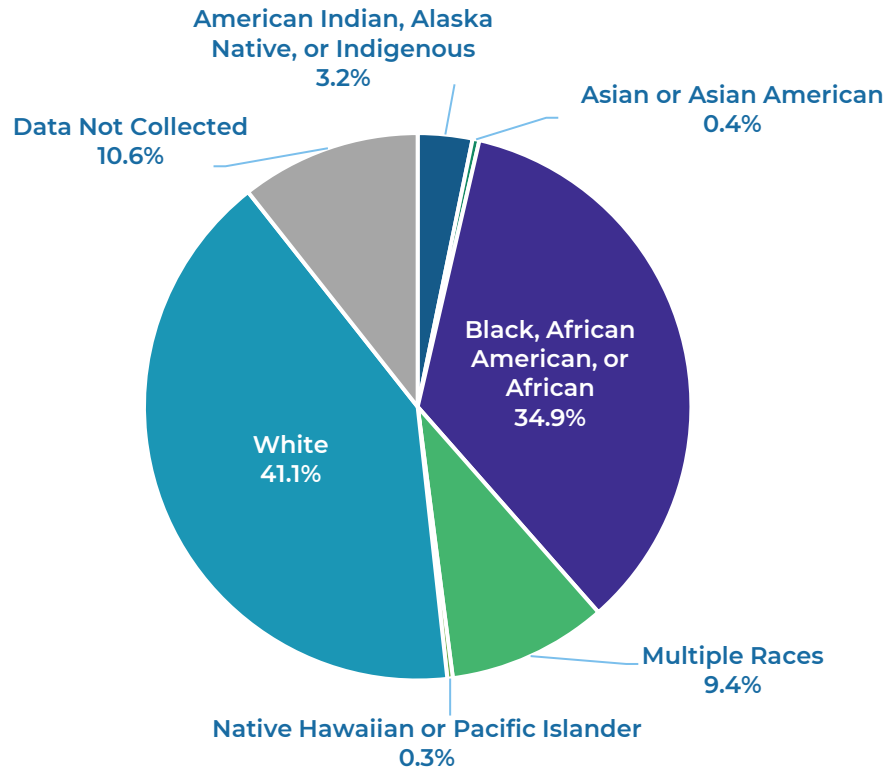


Note: In FY2022 only households with at least one adult and one child were considered Families.

**Table 2: Age Distribution Among Clients Served by NY-508**  
FY2023, Niagara County

Age	Count of Clients	% of Clients
<5	112	9.0%
5-12	166	13.4%
13-17	125	10.1%
<b>All Youth (under 18)</b>	<b>403</b>	<b>32.5%</b>
18-24	81	6.5%
25-34	230	18.5%
35-44	213	17.2%
45-54	142	11.4%
55-61	84	6.8%
62+	73	5.9%
<b>All Adults (18 and Older)</b>	<b>823</b>	<b>70.7%</b>
Data Not Collected	15	1.2%

**Figure 3: Race Distribution Among Clients Served by NY-508  
FY2023, Niagara County**

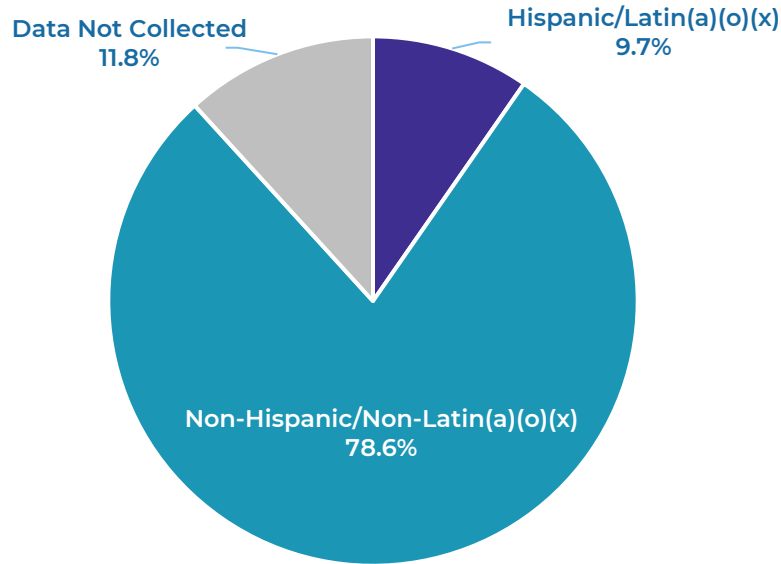


**Table 3: Comparison of Race Distribution between People Who Experienced Homelessness and All Residents  
FY2023, Niagara County**

Race	% of People Experiencing Homelessness	% of All Niagara County Residents
Asian or Asian American	0.5%	1.2%
Black, African American, or African	39.0%	6.6%
American Indian, Alaska Native, or Indigenous	3.6%	0.6%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.4%	0.0%
White	46.0%	84.9%
Other Race	N/A	1.1%
Multiple Races	10.6%	5.6%

*Note: Clients whose Race was not known are excluded from the People Who Experienced Homelessness calculation. (n=1109)*

**Figure 4: Ethnicity Distribution Among Clients Served by NY-508  
FY2023, Niagara County**

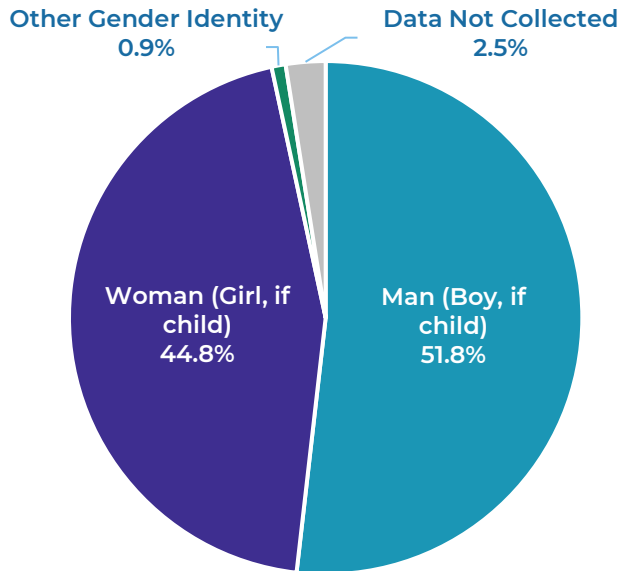


**Table 4: Comparison of Ethnicity Distribution between People Who Experienced Homelessness and All Residents  
FY2023, Niagara County**

Ethnicity	% of People Experiencing Homelessness	% of All Niagara County Residents
Hispanic/Latin(a)(o)(x)	11.0%	3.6%
Non-Hispanic/Non-Latin(a)(o)(x)	89.0%	96.4%

*Note: Clients whose Ethnicity was not known are excluded from the People Who Experienced Homelessness calculation. (n=1095)*

**Figure 5: Gender Identity Distribution Among Clients Served by NY-508 FY2023, Niagara County**



**Table 5: Comparison of Gender Identity Distribution between People Who Experienced Homelessness and All Residents FY2023, Niagara County**

Gender Identity	% of People Experiencing Homelessness	% of All Niagara County Residents
<b>Man (Boy, if child)</b>	53.1%	49.2%
<b>Woman (Girl, if child)</b>	46.0%	50.8%
<b>Other Gender Identity</b>	0.9%	N/A

*Note: Clients whose Gender Identity was not known are excluded from the People Who Experienced Homelessness calculation. (n=1210)*

**Table 6: Comparison of Disability Status Distribution between People Who Experienced Homelessness and All Residents**  
FY2023, Niagara County

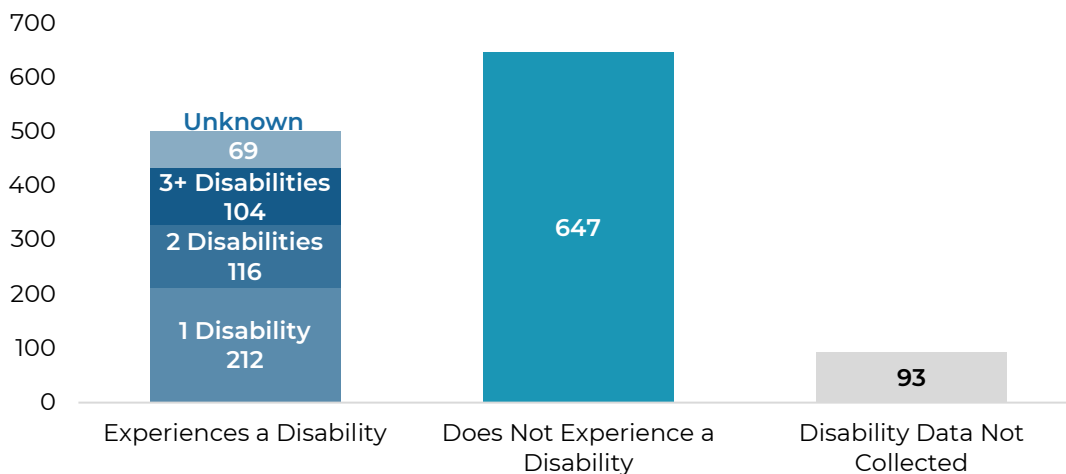
	% of People Experiencing Homelessness	% of All Niagara County Residents
Experience a Disability	40.4%	15.3%

**Table 7: Disability Type Distribution Among Clients Served by NY-508**  
FY2023, Niagara County

Disability Type	Count of Clients	% of Clients w 1+ Disability	% of All Clients
Mental Health Disorder	279	55.7%	22.5%
Alcohol Use Disorder	19	3.8%	1.5%
Drug Use Disorder	67	13.4%	5.4%
Both Alcohol and Drug Use Disorder	52	10.4%	4.2%
Chronic Health Condition	134	26.7%	10.8%
HIV/AIDS	9	1.8%	0.7%
Developmental Disability	67	13.4%	5.4%
Physical Disability	137	27.3%	11.0%

*Note: Number of clients who experienced one or more disabilities is 501. Columns may not sum to 100% as clients may experience multiple disability types or not experience any disability.*

**Figure 6: Number of Disabilities Distribution Among Clients Served by NY-508**  
FY2023, Niagara County





## 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 14 in the Appendix for definitions*

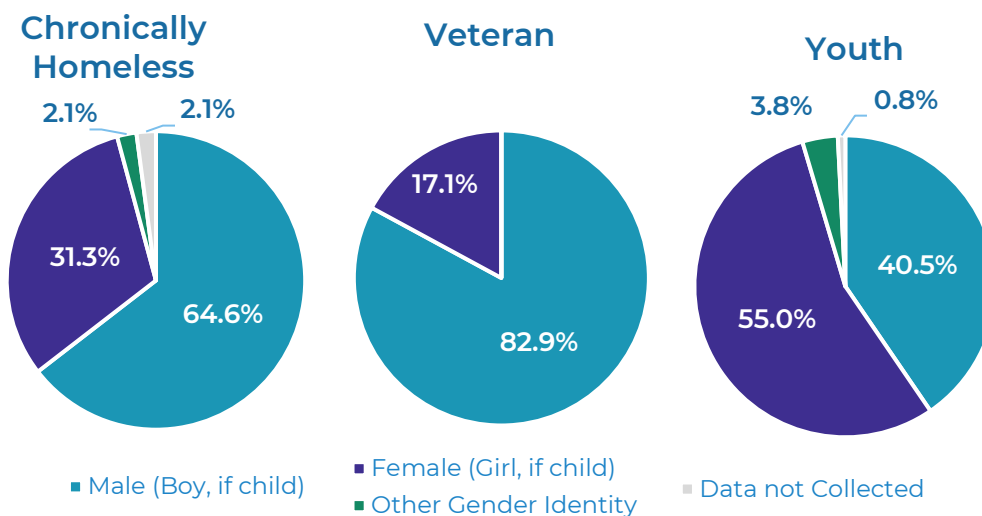
**Table 8: Special Populations Distribution Among Clients Served by NY-508 FY2023, Niagara County**

Special Population	Count of Clients	% of Clients
Chronically Homeless	48	3.9%
Survivor of Domestic Violence	108	8.7%
Veteran	41	3.3%
Youth	131	10.6%

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

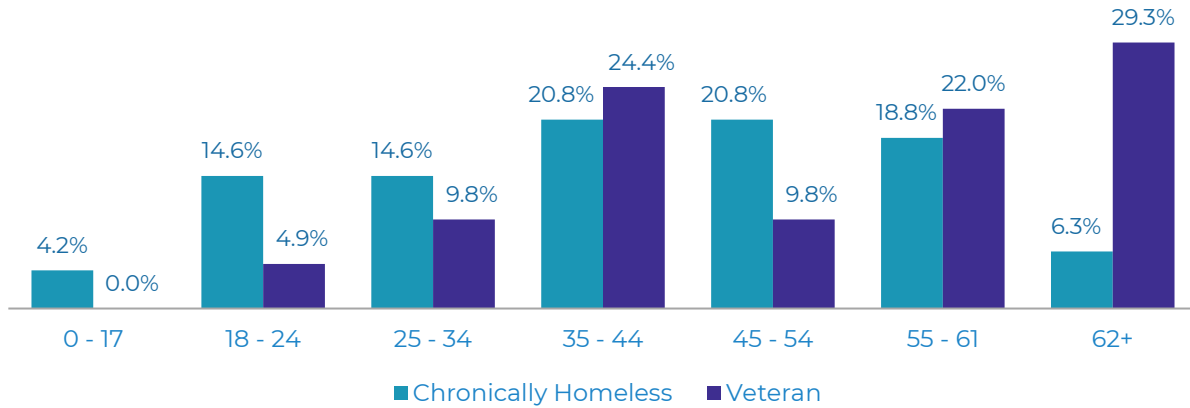
**Figure 7: Gender Distribution Among Special Population Clients Served by NY-508**

FY2023, Niagara County



**Figure 8: Age Distribution Among Special Population Clients Served by NY-508**

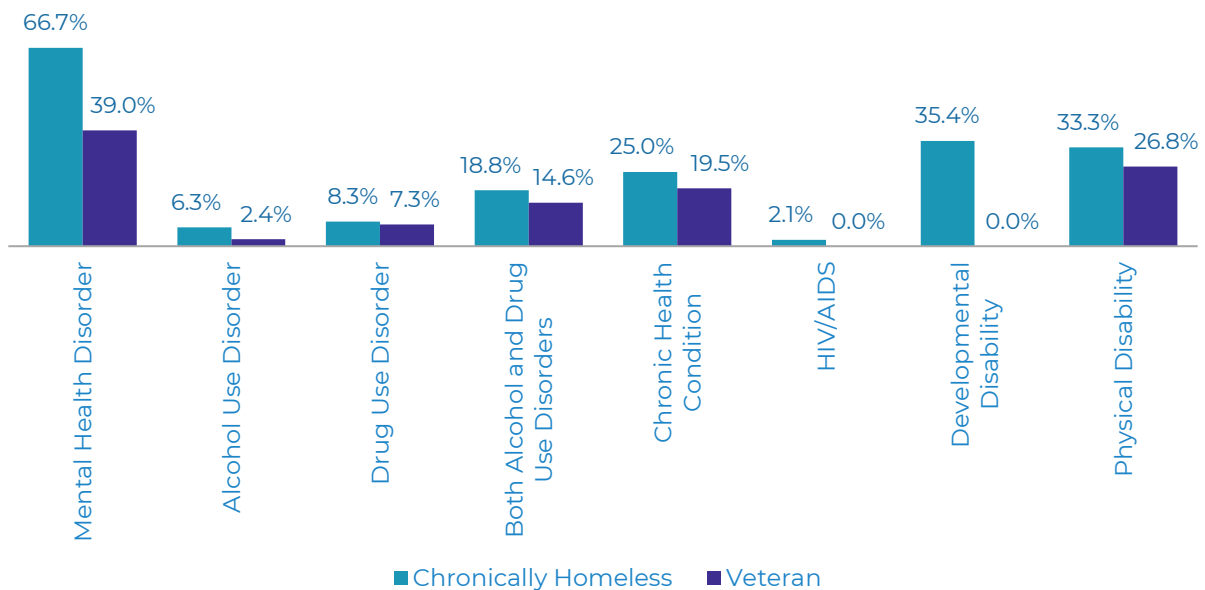
FY2023, Niagara County



Note: The denominators for the percentage calculations are the number of Chronically Homeless (n=48) and the number of Veterans (n=41).

**Figure 9: Disability Type Distribution Among Special Population Clients Served by NY-508**

FY2023, Niagara County



Note: The denominators for the percentage calculations are the number of Chronically Homeless (n=48) and the number of Veterans (n=41).



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### Prior Residence

#### Where were people living before losing their housing?

- 40.8% of clients reported that their last permanent address was in the Little Italy, South End, and Hyde Park or Lockport areas.
- The proportion of clients who had been living in a place not meant for habitation decreased from 17.9% to 14.4% between FY2022 and FY2023.
- The proportion of clients who had been living in a jail, prison, or juvenile detention center decreased from 7.2% to 3.4% between FY2022 and FY2023.

**Table 9: Top Ten Zip Codes for the Last Permanent Residence Among Clients Served by NY-508 FY2023, Niagara County**

Zip Code of Last Permanent Address	% of Clients	Zip Code of Last Permanent Address	% of Clients
14301	22.7%	14120	2.7%
14094	18.1%	14215	1.9%
14305	15.2%	14207	1.7%
14303	8.4%	14211	1.5%
14304	4.8%	14092	1.0%

Note: Clients whose Zip Code of Last Permanent Address was not known are excluded from the calculation (n=587). 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 FY2023.

**Table 10: Top Ten Previous Residence Types Among Clients Served by NY-508 FY2023, Niagara County**

Residence Prior to Project Entry	Count of Clients	% of Clients
Staying or living in a family member's room, apartment or house	239	19.7%
Rental by client, no ongoing housing subsidy	209	17.2%
Emergency shelter, including hotel or motel paid for with emergency shelter voucher	178	14.7%
Place not meant for habitation	175	14.4%
Staying or living in a friend's room, apartment or house	153	12.6%
Hotel or motel paid for without emergency shelter voucher	76	6.3%
Jail, prison, or juvenile detention facility	41	3.4%
Hospital or other residential non-psychiatric medical facility	37	3.1%
Safe Haven	27	2.2%
Rental by client, with ongoing housing subsidy	26	2.2%

Note: Clients whose Prior Residence Type was not known are excluded from the calculation. (n=1212). The Prior Residence Type is provided by the Head of Household upon their first entry into a NY-508 Service Provider during FY2023.



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## Causes

### Why did people experience homelessness?

- The proportion of clients who reported that a court eviction by their landlord is the primary reason they lost their housing increased from 5.4% to 9.3% between FY2022 and FY2023.
- The proportion of clients who reported that a release from an institution is the primary reason they lost their housing decreased from 19.0% to 12.7% between FY2022 and FY2023.
- 47.5% of Niagara County residents who rent their residence pay more than 30% of their income on rent alone.

**Table 11: Top Ten Primary Reason for Homelessness Clients Served by NY-508 FY2023, Niagara County**

Primary Reason for Homelessness	Count of Clients	% of Clients
Relocation from out of the NY-508 CoC Area	94	13.5%
Release from Institution	89	12.7%
Household Disputes (not DV)	77	11.0%
Eviction by primary tenant	66	9.4%
Court eviction by landlord	65	9.3%
Loss of Job/Income (includes public benefits)	59	8.4%
Domestic Violence (DV)	47	6.7%
Asked to leave by landlord	46	6.6%
Mental Health	29	4.2%
Problems with building	29	4.2%

*Note: Clients whose Primary Reason for Homelessness was not known are excluded from the calculation. (n=699). The Primary Reason for Homelessness is provided by the Head of Household upon their first entry into the Homelessness Alleviation System during FY2023.*

**Table 12: Percent of Income Towards Rent Distribution Among Residents 2018-2022 Average**

Percent of Income Towards Rent	Niagara County Residents
Less than 15.0 percent	17.7 %
15.0 to 19.9 percent	13.0%
20.0 to 24.9 percent	9.9%
25.0 to 29.9 percent	11.8%
30.0 to 34.9 percent	8.4%
35.0 percent or more	39.1%



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## Exit Destination

**When people exit the system, where do they go?** In FY2023 the number of people experiencing homelessness increased from FY2022, but the number of supported housing beds and affordable housing units stayed relatively the same. As a result, clients remained in shelters for longer and fewer were able to find stable housing.

**Table 13: Residence Type Upon Exit Distribution Among Clients Served by NY-508 FY2023, Niagara County**

Exit Destination Type*	Count of Leavers	% of Leavers
Permanent	318	31.6%
Temporary	153	15.2%
Institution	41	4.1%
Other/Unknown	494	49.1%

*Note: The denominator for the percent calculation is the number of clients who exited a NY-508 Service Provider during FY2023 (n=1006).*

*\*See Table 15 in the Appendix for definitions*

## 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.

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:

- Community Missions of the Niagara Frontier, Inc
- Heart, Love, & Soul Daybreak
- Niagara County Department of Social Services
- Pinnacle Community Services (Casey House, The Crib)
- Save the Michael's of the World
- YWCA of Niagara Frontier



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Thank you to all agencies who provided aggregate or de-identified client-level data to the Homeless Alliance for the NY-508 estimates:

- Lockport Cares
- Niagara Gospel Rescue Mission
- PathStone Corporation
- YWCA of Niagara Frontier



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## Appendix

**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.

**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.

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

**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.

**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 FY2023.

**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 other housing or other necessary services to families and individuals experiencing homelessness. These projects do not provide housing or housing assistance.

**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 14: Special Populations Definitions/Criteria**

Population	Definition/Criteria
<b>Chronically Homeless</b>	An individual with a disability who has been homeless for at least 12 consecutive months <b>or</b> has been homeless on at least 4 separate occasions in the last 3 years and the combined time homeless equals at least 12 months.
<b>Survivor of Domestic Violence</b>	An individual who has previously or is currently experiencing domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence or stalking.
<b>Veteran</b>	An individual who has ever been on active duty in the armed forces of the United States.
<b>Youth</b>	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 15: Residence Type Upon Exit Definitions**

Exit Destination Type Specifics			
Permanent	Temporary	Institution	Other/Unknown
Owned by client (with or without subsidy)	Emergency shelter, hotel/motel paid with voucher	Foster care home or foster care group home	Client doesn't know
Permanent housing (other than RRH) for formerly homeless persons	Host Home (non-crisis)	Hospital or other residential non-psychiatric medical facility	Client prefers not to answer
Rental by client (in public housing or with or without subsidy or voucher)	Hotel/motel without voucher	Jail, prison, or juvenile detention facility	Data not collected
Staying or living with family or friends (permanent tenure)	Residential project or halfway house with no homeless criteria	Long-term care facility or nursing home	Deceased
	Safe Haven	Psychiatric hospital or other psychiatric facility	No exit interview completed
	Staying or living with family or friends (temporary tenure)	Substance use treatment facility or detox center	Other
	Transitional housing for homeless persons		