

2024 HOMELESSNESS IN NEW BEDFORD

Point In Time Census and Analytics

City of New Bedford

Office of Housing & Community Development

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Overview

- Baseline Information
- Statistical Highlights
- Housing Inventory
- 2024 Take Aways

Although this presentation approaches some discussion as to patterns and trending revealed by the 2024 annual data collection, it is not intended to supplant a more detailed discussion about performance and response to homelessness.



Baseline Information

Baseline Information

- Point In Time (PIT) focuses on people
- Housing Inventory Count (HIC) focuses on beds
- The PIT is required of each Continuum of Care (CoC) by the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD). It is a census of those unsheltered and living on the streets, and those in emergency shelters and transitional housing. It's a sampling of what homelessness might look like in New Bedford on any given day.

Baseline Information

- The PIT is undertaken annually in New Bedford on the last Wednesday of January, consistent with federal guidelines.
- As was the case the previous year, the CoC's professional Street Outreach Team (Steppingstone, Inc.) performed the PIT to count unsheltered persons in 2024; individual emergency shelter and transitional housing personnel did so for their respective facilities.
- Volunteers were coordinated, donations collected and backpacks filled and provided to unsheltered folks encountered by the Street Outreach Team.
- Highlighted results of the PIT and HIC follows.

Statistical Highlights

Statistical Highlights

- The 2024 PIT Count identified 346 people, both sheltered and unsheltered. While this overall number is consistent with the previous few years it is below the 15 year PIT Count average of 382.
- Although the count of those in **shelter** is the lowest number on record, the number of **unsheltered** persons increased in 2024.

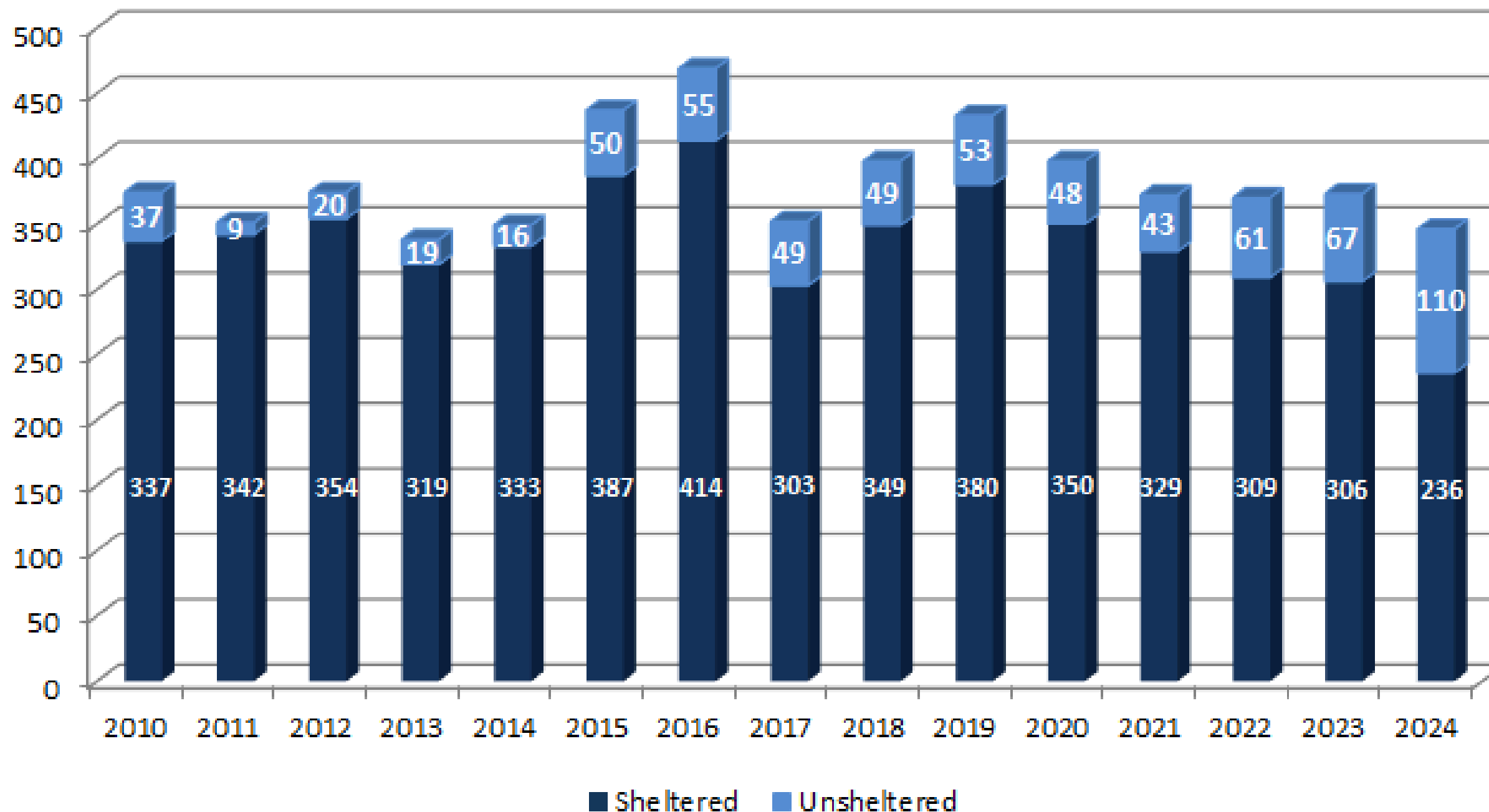
*Of
note...*

Fair weather on the night of the 2024 Count meant the cold weather overflow shelter did NOT open. Unlike past years, not having the overflow shelter open meant that many who were unsheltered were unable to stay indoors that night resulting in the highest unsheltered count ever recorded at 110.

However, if one were to combine the number of persons unsheltered in 2023 (67) with the number of persons unsheltered by in the overflow shelter (30) that night, the number of total unsheltered rises to 97, more closely approximating the 2024 count.

Statistical Highlights

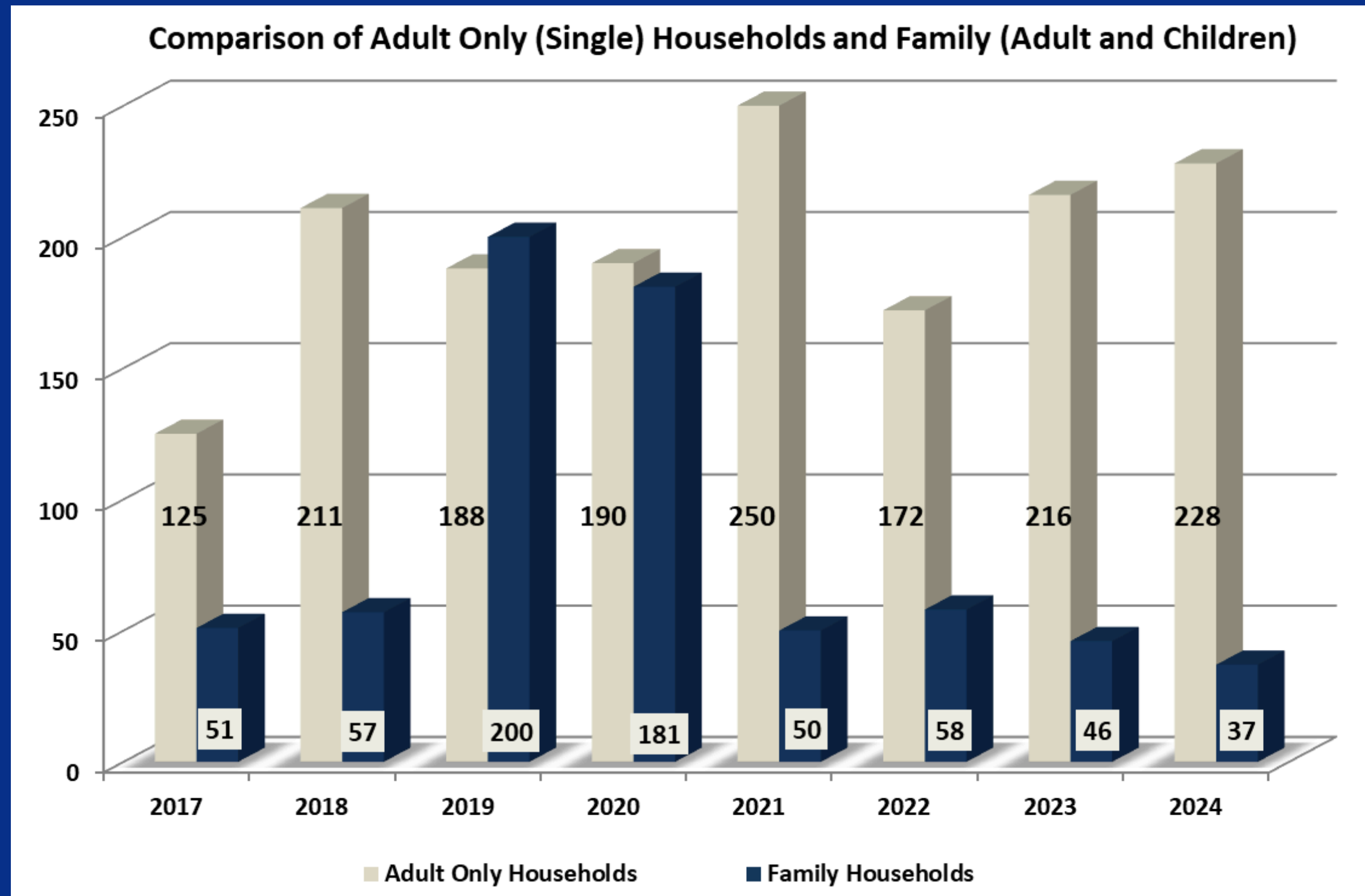
Sheltered and Unsheltered PIT Count



Statistical Highlights

- Sheltered and unsheltered individual households (single adult only households) outpaced family households in 2024 at a rate of over 6:1 and continues to trend toward greater individual households.
- The number of sheltered and unsheltered individual households increased by 5% between 2023 (216) and 2024 (228).
- The number of sheltered family households in 2024 (37) was 20% less than the number of sheltered families recorded the previous year (46).

Statistical Highlights



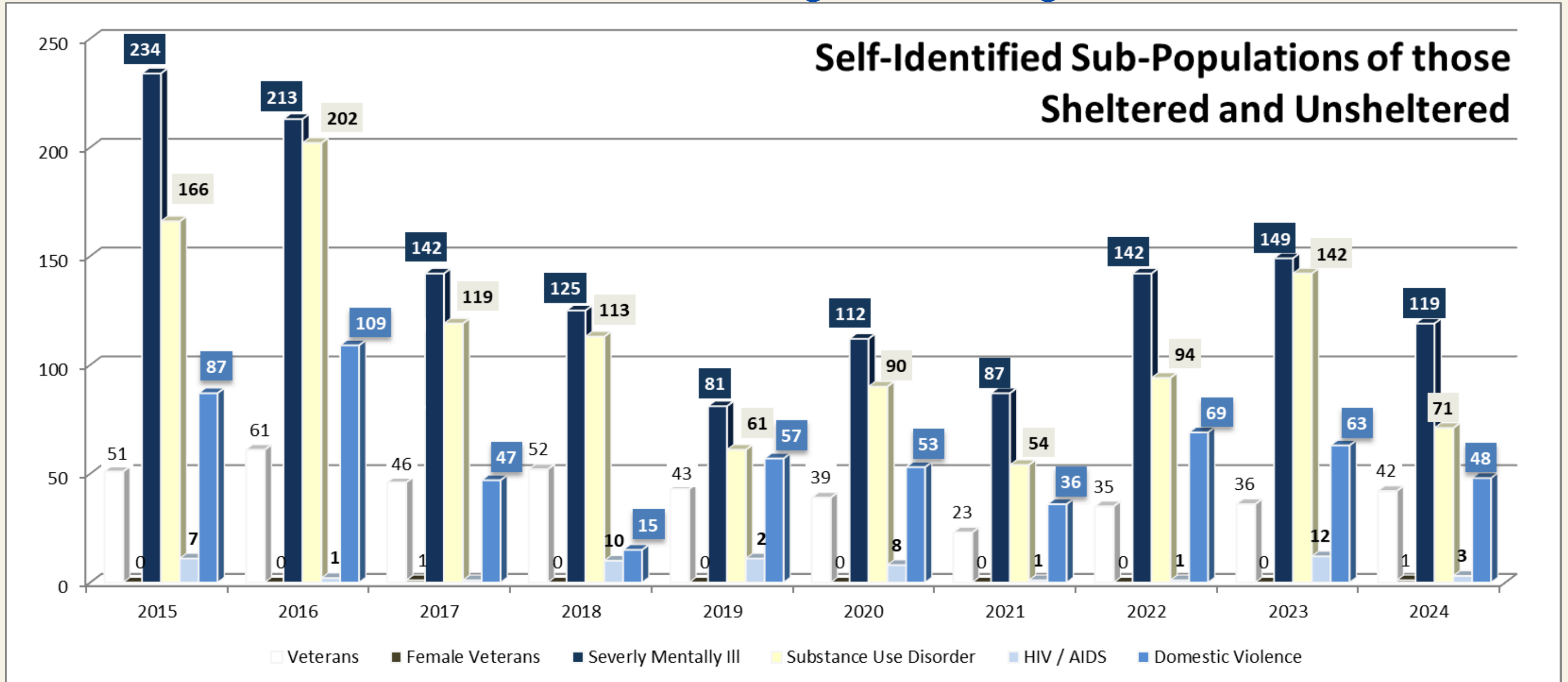
Statistical Highlights

- As has historically been the case, of the sheltered and unsheltered adults, those self-identifying as having experienced serious mental illness and/or substance use disorder have continued to be the most prevalent self-identified subpopulations followed by domestic violence.
- Individuals in shelter self-identifying as experiencing serious mental illness significantly declined (62%) in 2024 from the previous year but almost doubled since 2023 among those unsheltered.
- For the first time in four years, there were four unsheltered persons who self-identified as being veterans in New Bedford; this tied with Domestic Violence as the third most prevalent 2024 subpopulation.

*Of
note...*

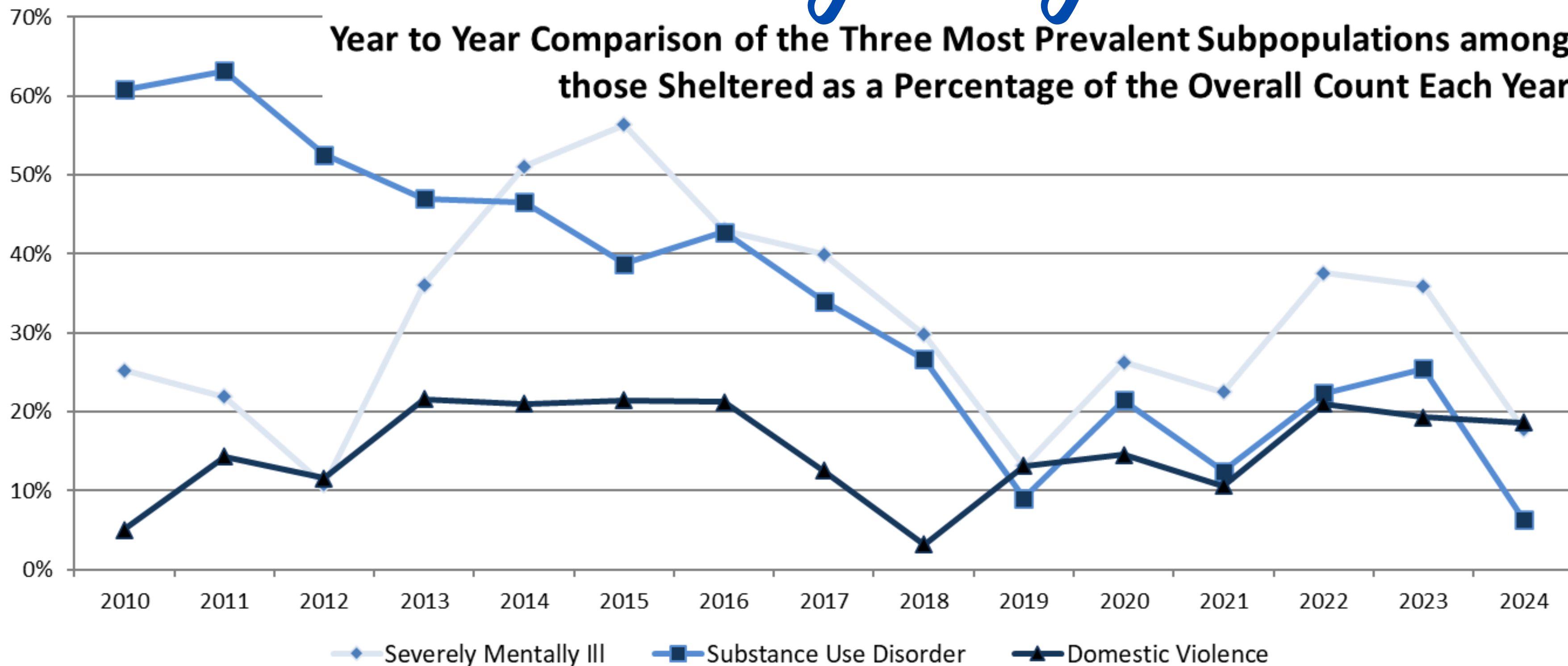
The number of those who were unsheltered (only) and self-identifying as having experienced serious mental illness and/or substance use disorder was at the highest level in 2024 since the count has been undertaken; the 2024 figures were almost double that of 2023's count and was 600% higher than the 2021 count.

Statistical Highlights

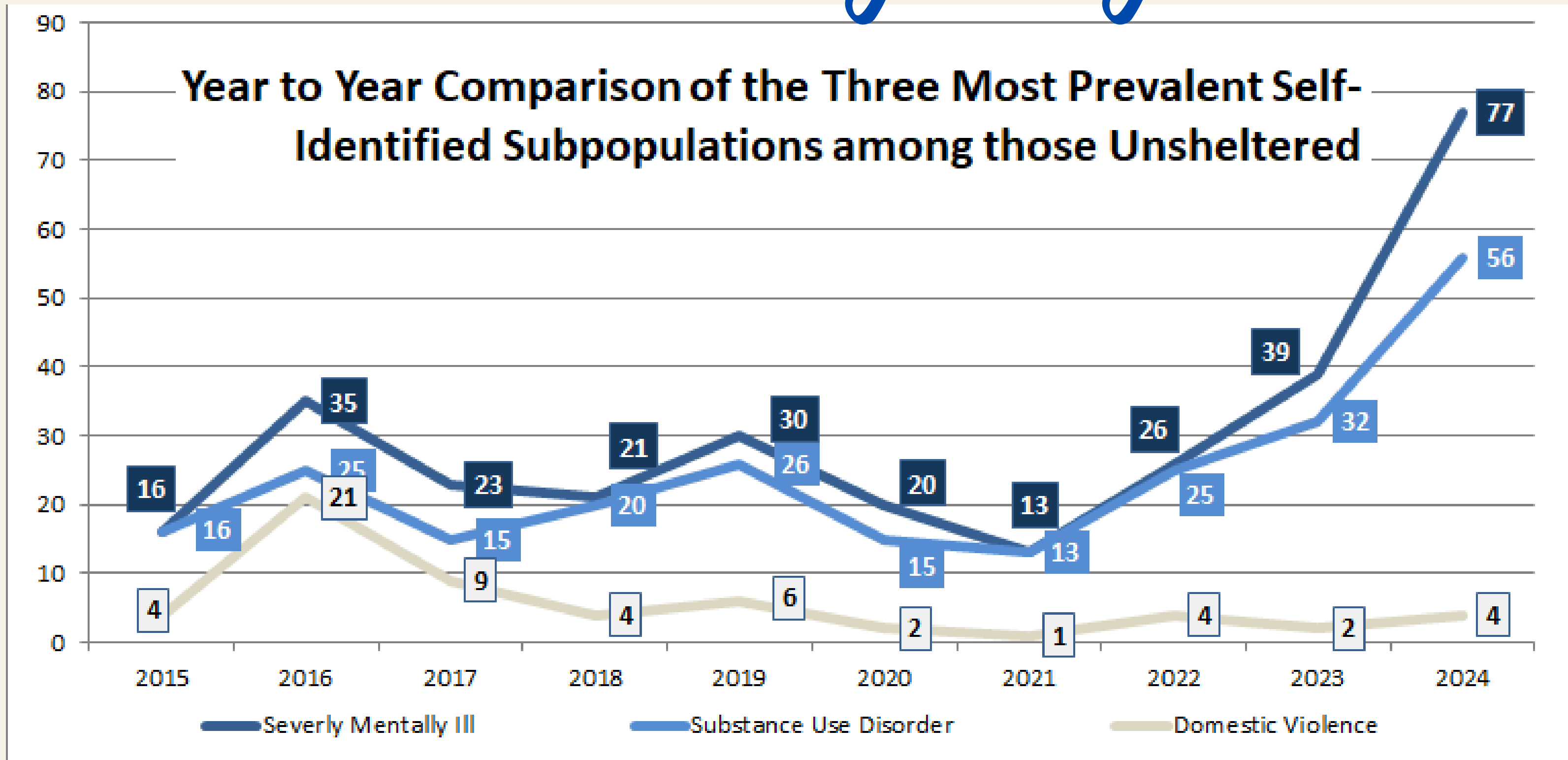


Statistical Highlights

Year to Year Comparison of the Three Most Prevalent Subpopulations among those Sheltered as a Percentage of the Overall Count Each Year



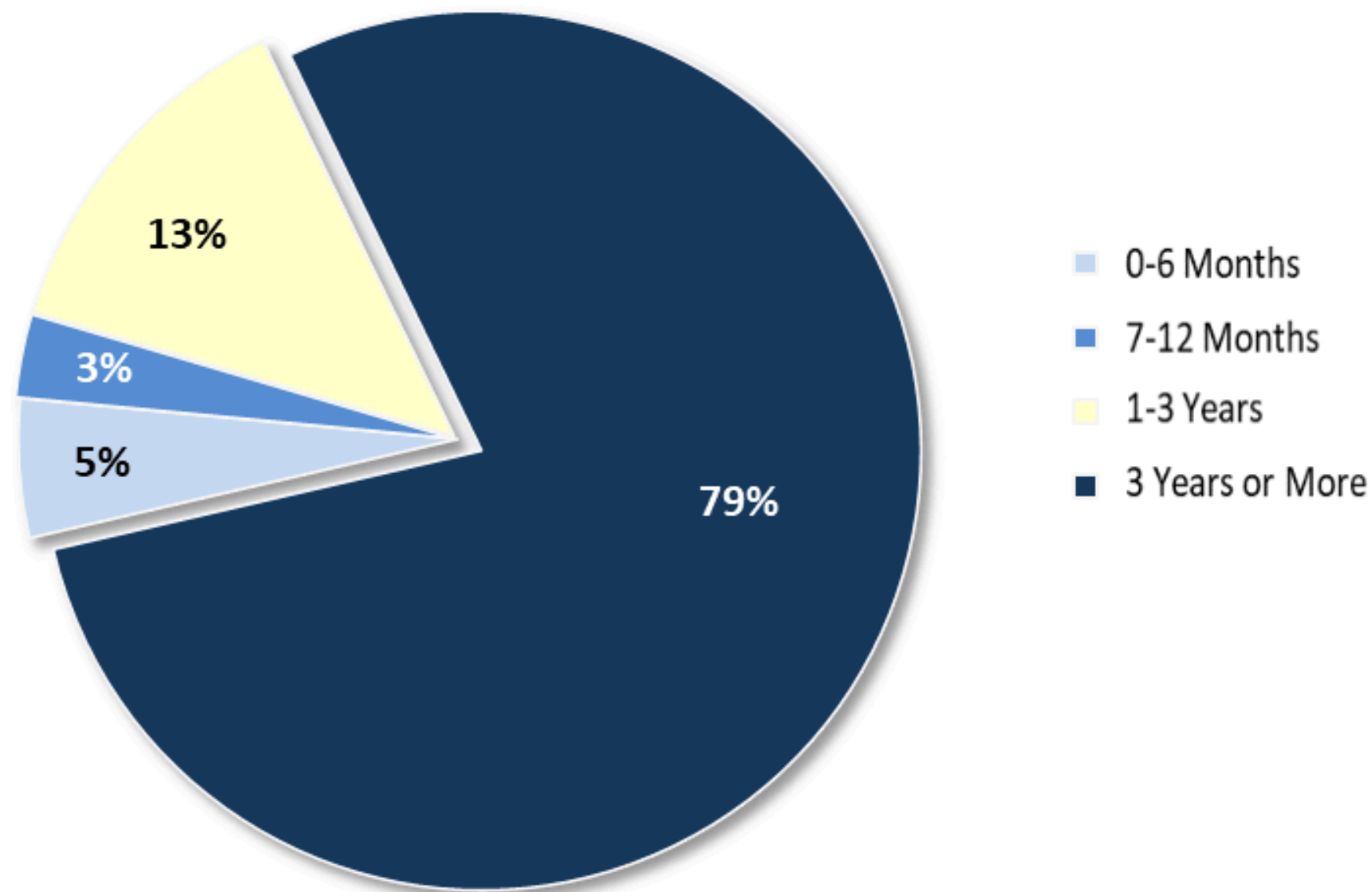
Statistical Highlights



Statistical Highlights

Unsheltered Individuals Living in New Bedford

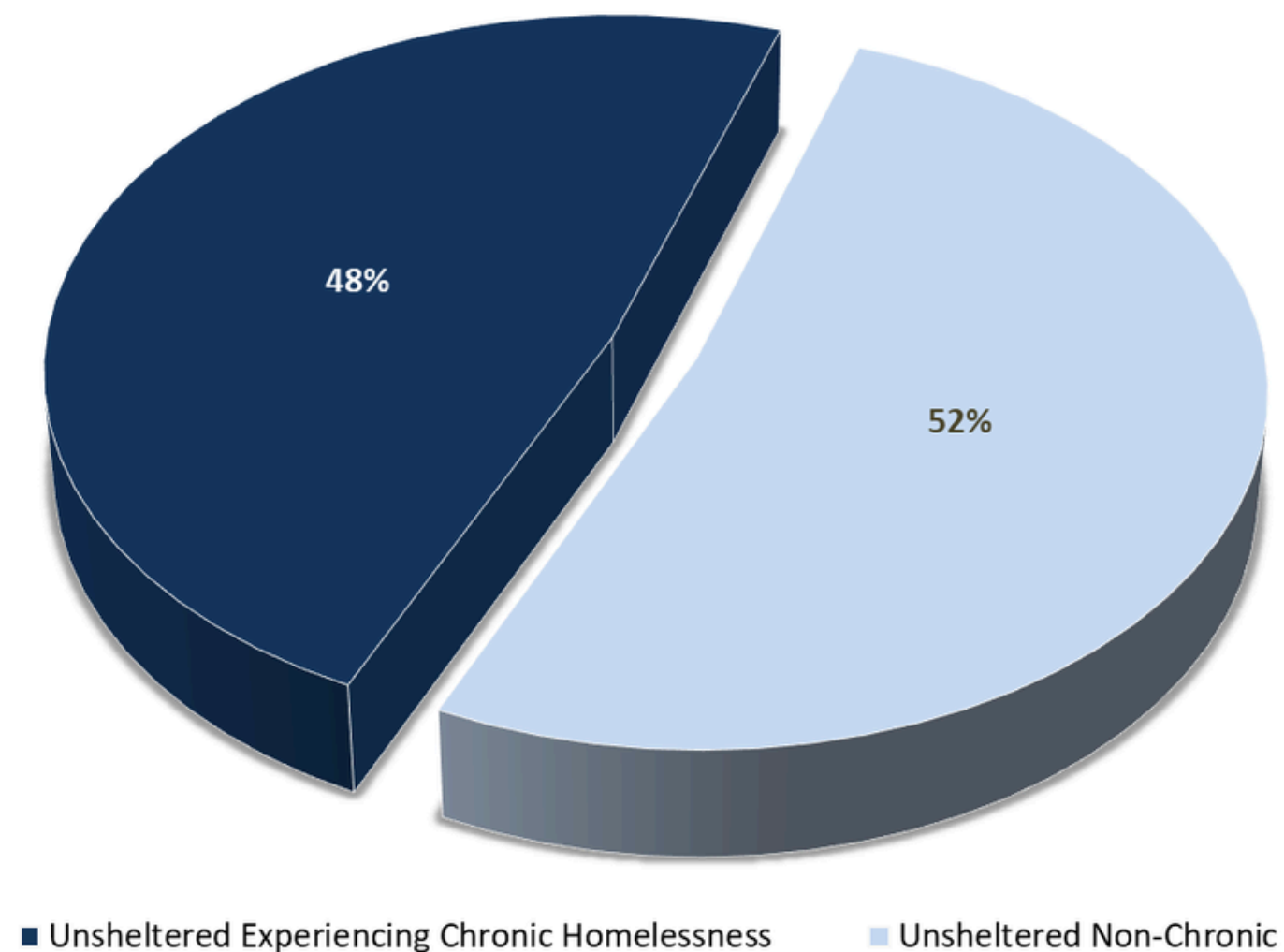
(Of those responding, number of years)



- In the 2024 PIT Count, 98 of the 110 unsheltered individuals reported the length of time they had been within the City of New Bedford.
- While 92% of people reported living in New Bedford for at least one or more years, 79% reported having been in New Bedford for 3 years or more.

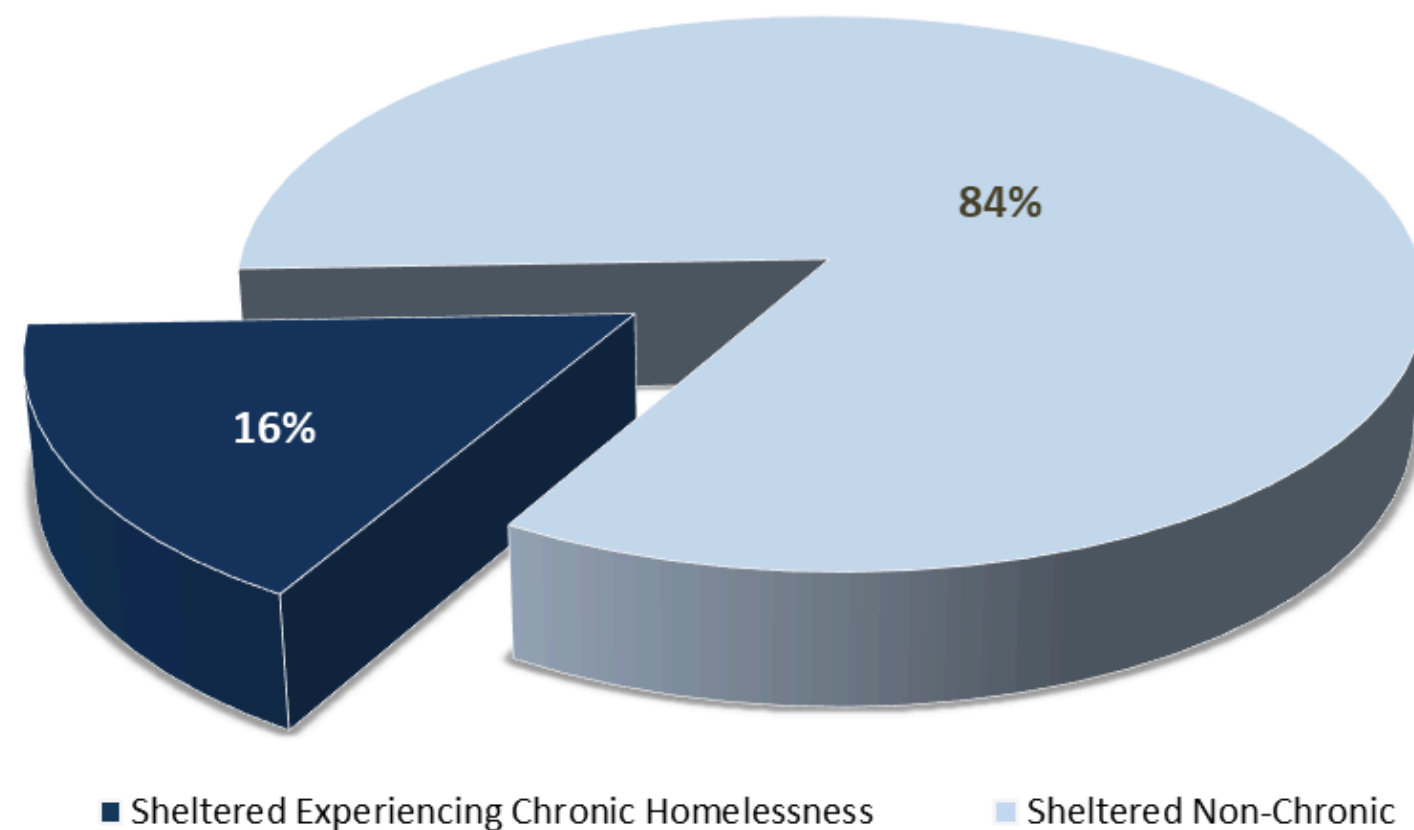
Statistical Highlights

Unsheltered Persons who were experiencing Chronic Homelessness in 2024



Roughly half of those who were living unsheltered during 2024's count met the federal definition of chronic homelessness (48%).

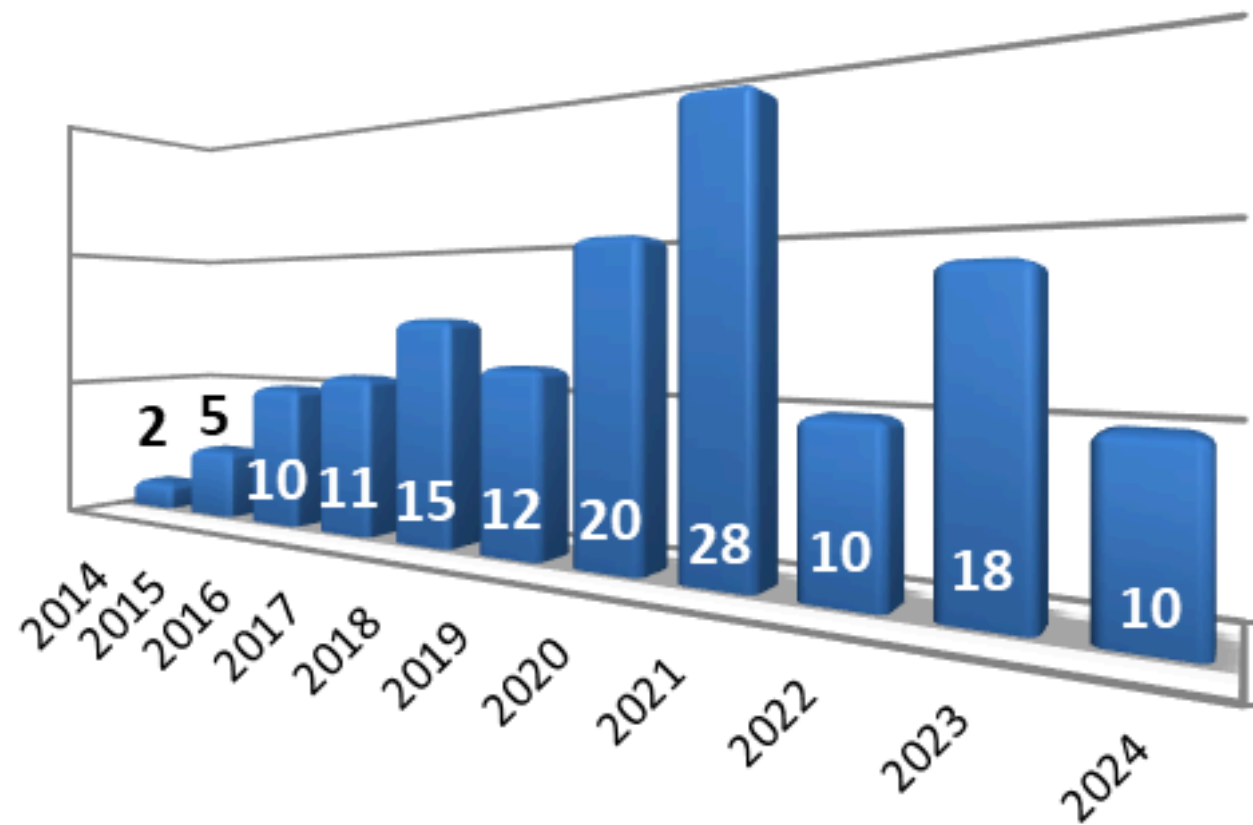
Sheltered Persons who were experiencing Chronic Homelessness in 2024



Of the 236 individuals who were sheltered in 2024, 16% were considered chronically homeless, a figure slightly higher than the previous year's level.

Statistical Highlights

Total Unaccompanied Youth Count



Relatively speaking, the number of unaccompanied youth represents just 3% of the overall Point In Time Count; given this, all census shifts from year to year must be considered against the relatively small cohort being reviewed.

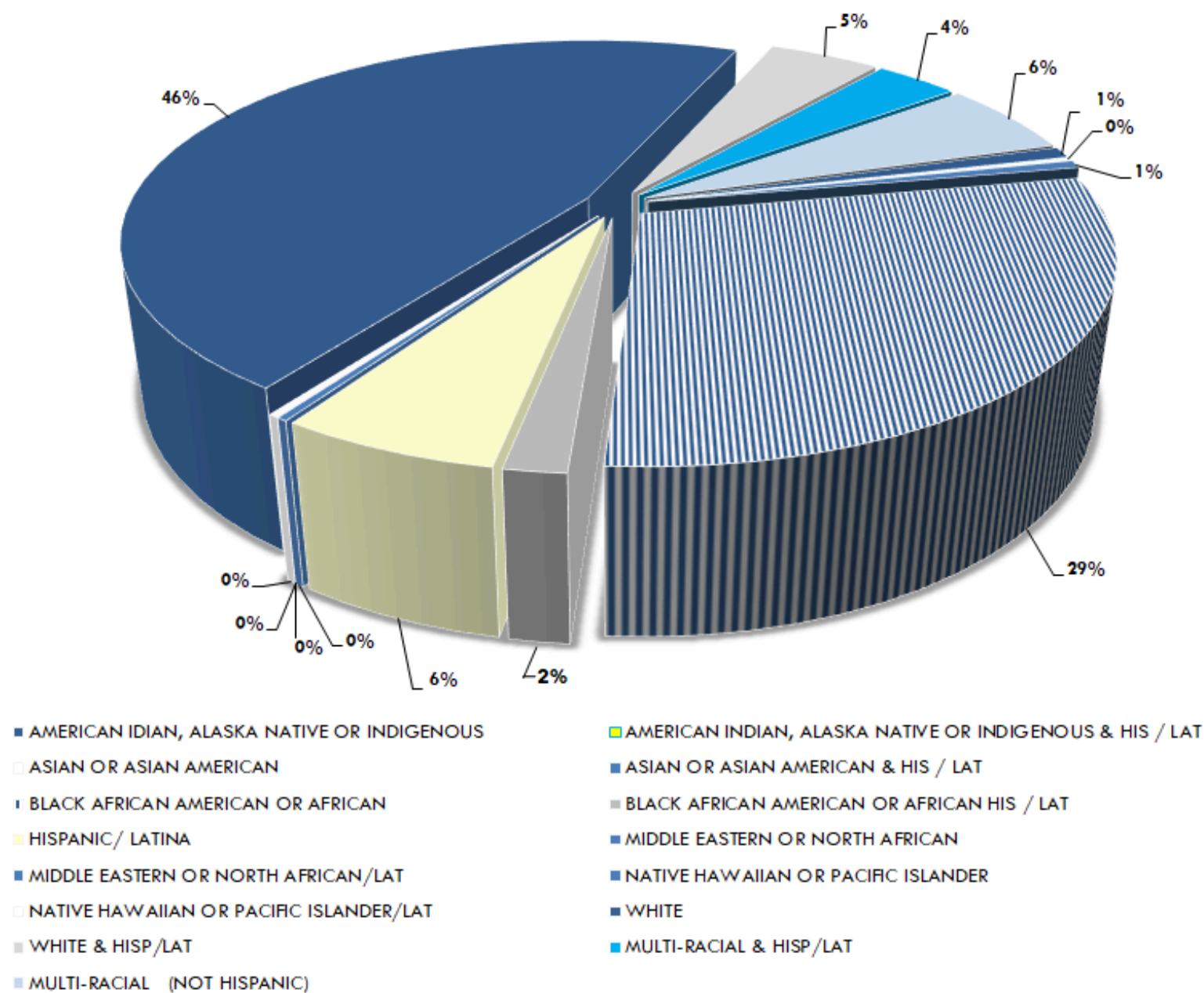
Unlike the previous year, in 2024 there was a slightly greater number of unaccompanied youth who were living unsheltered on the streets (64% which included one such individual who was under age 18) compared with the number of those living in shelter (36%).



The number of sheltered and unsheltered unaccompanied youth (those aged up to 24) fell below the 11 year average and was 80% less than the previous year's figure.

Statistical Highlights

2024 Sheltered and Unsheltered Self-Identified Race & Ethnicity
 (Of the total 340 responding, percentage of each identified race and ethnicity)



- Of the total 346 sheltered and unsheltered persons counted, 340 self-identified their race/ethnicities.
- 158 of the 340 persons identified as white (46%) and 99 of the 340 identified as Black African American or African (29%).
- The third highest tally were the 21 persons self-identifying as Hispanic/Latina (6%) and the 20 persons identifying as being “multi-racial not Hispanic” (6%)
- While over half of those individuals who were unsheltered self-identified as white (54%), 25% self-identified as Black African American or African.
- Black African American or African individuals who are unsheltered are disproportionately represented in both the unsheltered count as well as the overall count when compared with the population of New Bedford, overall.

Housing Inventory

Housing Inventory

- During the 2024 PIT, a Housing Inventory was also conducted to better understand the New Bedford Continuum of Care's shelter and housing options.
- In the course of developing its Housing Inventory Chart (HIC), a utilization study was also undertaken to provide a snapshot as to the extent to which beds were occupied during a point in time.
- All three housing types considered--emergency shelter, transitional housing and permanent housing--experienced increased utilization rates in 2024 when compared with the previous year.



Housing Inventory

Emergency Shelter Utilization (that does not include the seasonal overflow shelter as it was closed during the 2024 Count) did surpass the 2023 rate of 83% indicating a higher use of emergency shelter beds for individuals and families.

Prog. Type	Organization Name	Program Name	PIT Count	Year-Round Beds	Utilization Rate
ES	Catholic Social Services Inc.	Sister Rose and Grace House	36	36	100%
ES	Catholic Social Services Inc.	HOUSE Program	5	5	100%
ES	Justice Resource Institute	Focus on the Family	36	36	100%
ES	Missionary Sisters of Charity	Missionary Sisters of Charity	9	9	100%
ES	SEMCOA	Harbour House	43	63	68%
ES	Greater New Bedford Women's Center	Artemis I Shelter	13	13	100%
ES	Greater New Bedford Women's Center	Artemis II Shelter	12	16	75%
EMERGENCY SHELTER TOTAL			154	178	87%

Housing Inventory

Transitional Housing was being utilized at a rate of 83% during the 2024 PIT Count. While an increase above 2023's low 64% rate, these figures continue to suggest some diminishment in transitional housing need.

Prog Type	Organization Name	Program Name	PIT Count	Year-Round Beds	Utilization Rate
TH	Steppingstone, Inc.	Graduate Program	7	7	100%
TH	Steppingstone, Inc.	NB Women's Therapeutic Community	21	21	100%
TH	SE MA Vets Housing Program, Inc.	VTH GPD	15	15	100%
TH	SE MA Vets Housing Program, Inc.	VTH Main House	23	23	100%
TH	The Women's Center	Housing Stabilization	16	42	38%
TRANSITIONAL HOUSING TOTAL			90	108	83%

Housing Inventory

Utilization of Permanent Housing had the highest utilization rate in 2024 at 95% indicating very few unit vacancies. This rate is 11% above last year's utilization rate of 84% for permanent housing and serves as an important indicator as to the need for new permanent housing.

Prog. Type	Organization Name	Program Name	PIT Count	Year-Round Beds	Utilization Rate
PSH	Catholic Charities Diocese of FR	Portico	101	123	82%
PSH	Catholic Charities Diocese of FR	PRISM	9	12	75%
PSH	PAACA, Inc.	Step Up	23	35	66%
PSH	SEMCOA Inc.	Unity House	12	15	80%
PSH	Southeast Family Services Inc.	Family Preservation Program	54	62	87%
PSH	Steppingstone, Inc.	Welcome Home	20	20	100%
PSH	Providence VA Medical Center	HUD VASH	25	25	100%
PSH	SE MA Veterans Program, Inc.	VTH-PSH	39	41	95%
OPH	PACE, Inc.	Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHV)	130	107	121%
PH-RRH	PACE, Inc.	HomeBASE Stabilization Prog	91	91	100%
PH-RRH	Catholic Charities Diocese of FR	EOHLC RRH	6	6	100%
PH-RRH	Catholic Charities Diocese of FR	Emergency Solutions Department	0	0	N/A
PH-RRH	PACE, Inc.	PACE Housing Services	0	0	N/A
PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING TOTAL			510	537	95%

Take Aways

Take Aways



Overall Count. The 2024 PIT Count identified 346 people, both sheltered and unsheltered, an overall figure largely consistent with the past few years. Despite such consistency, 2024's overall PIT Count nevertheless was the lowest count total since 2013. Although the number of unsheltered persons increased, the count of 236 for those in shelter reflects the second lowest shelter count on record.



Those Unsheltered. Fair weather on the night of the 2024 Count meant the cold weather overflow shelter was closed leaving unhoused persons who typically found refuge on colder nights presumably unsheltered. Because of this, the 110 people counted in 2024 can be understood as a combination of 80 folks on the streets and 30 who would have been housed in the overflow shelter were it open.



Household Composition. During the 2024 PIT Count there were 155 households in shelter, 76% of whom were individual (single adult households) and 24% of whom were family households. Sheltered Individual (single adult households) outpaced sheltered family households at a rate of roughly 3:1, a ratio consistent with 2023.



Subpopulations. Consistent with past years, those self-identifying as having a serious mental illness and/or a substas, represented the three most prevalent subpopulation attributes among both sheltered and unsheltered adults. Both serious mental illness and substance use disorder subpopulations have remained consistently high over the past 15 years.

Take Aways



Subpopulations in Shelter. In 2024, sheltered individuals self-identifying as severely mentally ill continued to decline with only 15% (42) people. This is a significant drop from the previous two years that saw higher numbers. Similarly, those living in shelter self-identifying as having a substance use disorder in 2024 reflects a sharp decrease from 2023 and 2022.



Subpopulations Unsheltered. The 2024 count marked the highest number of unsheltered adults self-identifying as having severe mental illness and/or substance use disorder since such counts have been conducted. Of particular note is that 70% (77) of unsheltered adults self-reported as having a severe mental illness in 2024 – triple the number of those self-identifying the same way just a few years ago in 2021.



Domestic Violence. Roughly 17% (48) of the sheltered and unsheltered population counted in 2024 identified as fleeing/surviving domestic violence. While the actual number of those self-identifying in this way is slightly lower than the 15-year average of 55, as a percentage of the overall count, the 2024 percentage of 17% is slightly greater than the 15-year average of 14%.



Veterans. For the first time in four years three individuals self-identified as being veterans in the New Bedford unsheltered count. At the same time, the total number of veterans in emergency shelter and transitional housing (39) was below the 15-year average of 46.

Take Aways



Chronic Homelessness. The ratio of those individuals, both sheltered and unsheltered, who did not meet the definition of chronic homelessness to those who were experiencing chronic homelessness was 3:1 (74% vs. 26%) an indication that the most vulnerable populations remain unhoused.



Unaccompanied Youth. The number of sheltered and unsheltered unaccompanied youth (those aged 18–24) decreased by 44% from the 2023 levels and was consistent with the 2022 count. Consistent with the 2023 count, 40% of the unaccompanied youth were living in shelter in 2024 while the remaining 60% (6 individuals) were living on the streets.



New Bedford Residency. As has been the case since such data was collected, over three-quarters of those counted in the 2024 PIT have lived in New Bedford for three or more years. Of those responding to questions about their residency, 92% have lived in New Bedford for over a year while 77% reported that they have lived in New Bedford for over 3 years. Five (5) of the respondents indicated they had been living in the City for six months or less.



Family Households. The number of adults (55) and children (63) living in family households in homeless shelters in New Bedford (118) has decreased by 25% compared with the 2023 count (157).

Take Aways



Utilization. During the 2024 PIT, emergency shelter utilization was 87% (154 of 178 beds), transitional housing was 83% (90 of 108 beds) and permanent housing utilization was 95% (510 of 537 beds). For each type of shelter/housing, the 2024 utilization rates were significantly higher than those recorded in 2023, attributable to the increasing demand for housing and correlating supports.



Housing Inventory-Permanent Housing. It's important to first recognize that 2024 saw a significant increase in the number of permanent housing beds dedicated to those experiencing homelessness. Despite the loss of 50 beds previously associated with Covid funding and a reduction in HUD VASH vouchers (for veterans), the 2024 inventory gained 140 new permanent housing beds through the distribution of Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHV) and increased HomeBASE dollars in the community.



Housing Inventory-Emergency Shelter. While other housing units saw varying levels of increase, the emergency shelter system experienced a notable decrease in beds shifting from 2023's 274 bed count to just 178 in 2024 marking a 35% reduction in the Continuum's shelter inventory in just one year. Although 30 of those beds are attributable to the cold weather overflow shelter which could not, by HUD standards, be included in the count as it was not open during the PIT Count, the difference can also be attributed to the loss of JRI FOCUS' 26 family beds, Catholic Charities' HOUSE program's 25 beds, and Killians' entire inventory of 8 beds.

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