

Ozarks Alliance to End Homelessness Unsheltered Point-in-Time Report

2021

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I. Introduction

Unsheltered Point-in-Time Survey

Every January, communities across the country complete an annual “Point-in-Time” count of people experiencing homelessness on a given night. These counts are federally mandated, and they provide important insight into each community’s homeless population. Locally, this effort is led by Community Partnership’s Ozarks Alliance to End Homelessness, which serves as the Department of Housing and Urban Development’s designated Continuum of Care for Greene, Christian, and Webster Counties.

The 2021 Point-in-Time Count assessed who was experiencing homelessness on the night of January 27, 2021. 583 individuals were identified as experiencing homelessness; 517 of those were staying in an emergency shelter (including 73 people staying at a Crisis Cold Weather Shelter and 158 people staying in a hotel placement through Community Partnership of the Ozark’s Merciful Nights Campaign) and 66 individuals were unsheltered.

This report examines responses to the 2021 Unsheltered Point-in-Time Survey conducted in Springfield and Greene County, Missouri, and provides information for 66 individuals who were unsheltered on the night of January 27, 2021. This count reflects 59 individuals who either completed the survey instrument or who were observed, and 7 additional household members for whom survey takers provided information.

The data was collected via paper and electronic surveys created by the Institute for Community Alliances and was administered by trained partner agency staff through street outreach on January 28 and 29, 2021. Outreach surveys collected in a paper format were entered into the electronic form by Community Partnership staff. Data were organized in an Excel file before being imported into SPSS for statistical analysis.

This report presents findings from four major sections of the survey instrument: 1) Demographic Profile of Participants, 2) Homelessness Status, 3) Disabling Conditions, and 4) Victimization. It also includes a summary of the number of homeless individuals served by eight cold weather shelters in Springfield from October 2020 through April 2021.

II. Findings

Demographic Profile of Participants

Most participants (78.7%) or other members of their household experiencing homelessness were aged thirty-five or older (Table 1). Men comprised 65.1% of the sample while women comprised 34.9% (Table 1). Most participants (84.5%) self-identified as white and 94.5% (Table 1) self-identified as non-Hispanic/Latino. Nearly thirty-six percent (35.6%) of participants reported being in the State’s care at some point in their life (Table 2). A few participants (7.5%) reported having served in the military (Table 3), with none having served in the National Guard. No participants reported having received healthcare or benefits from a Veterans Affairs medical center.

Table 1. Demographics

	Demographic Information	Percent of Participants	Percent for Greene County ¹
Age	18-24 years	6.6%	13.7%
	25-34 years	14.8%	14.2%
	35-50	45.9%	17.1%
	51-74	32.8%	27%
	N	61	--
Gender	Male	65.1%	48.7%
	Female	34.9%	51.3%
	N	63	--
Race	White	84.5%	86.9%
	Black or African American	5.2%	3.5%
	American Indian or Alaska Native	6.9%	0.4%
	Multiple Races	3.4%	2.9%
	N	58	--
Ethnicity	Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino	94.5%	96.1%
	Hispanic/Latino	5.5%	3.9%
	N	55	--

¹ County-level data comes from the 2019 American Community Survey. Note that the Census categories for Age (35-49 and 50-74) differ slightly from the survey categorizations (35-50 and 51-74); the Census category for multiple races is recorded as “two or more races.”

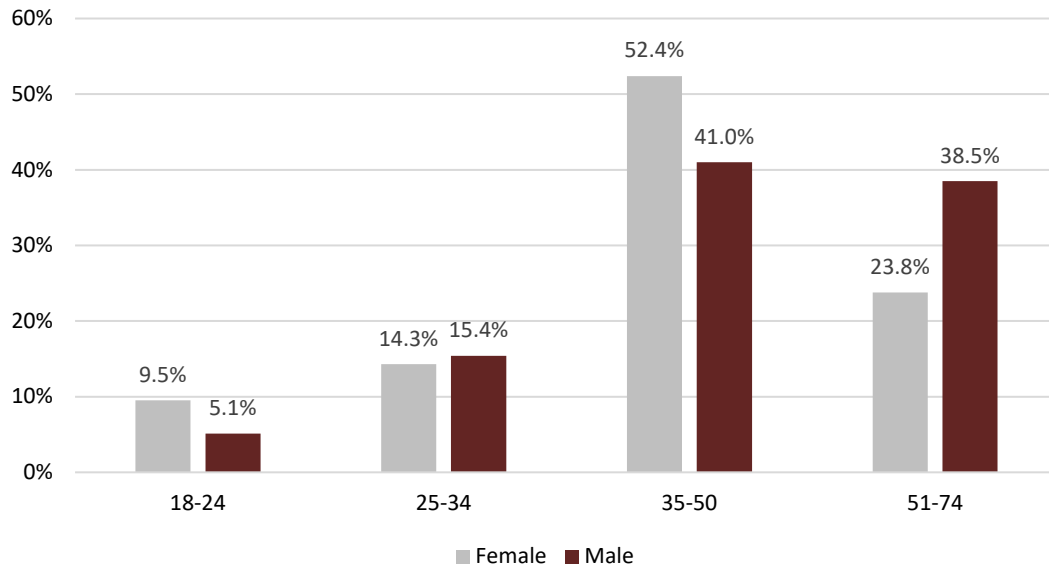


Figure 1. *Age of participants, by Gender*

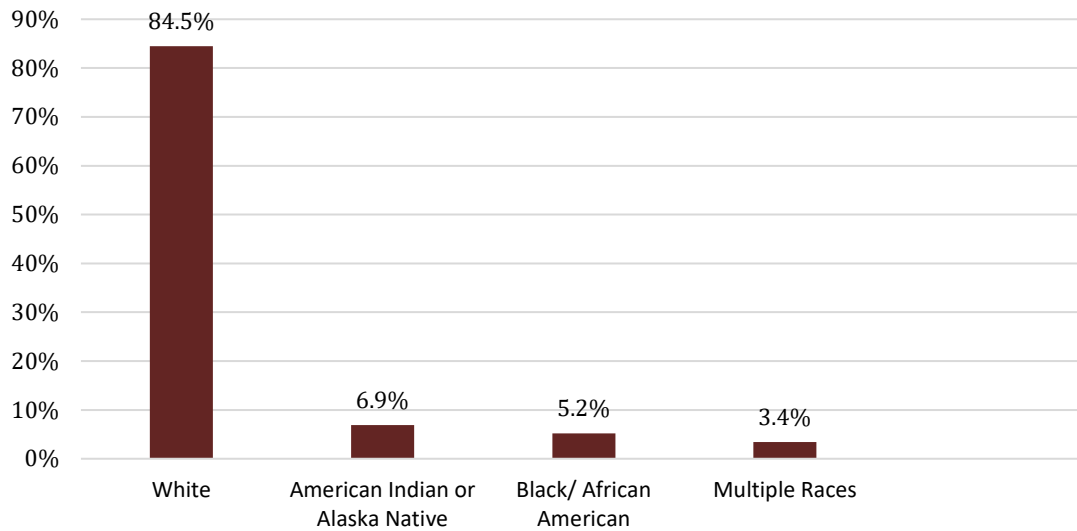


Figure 2. *Race of participants*

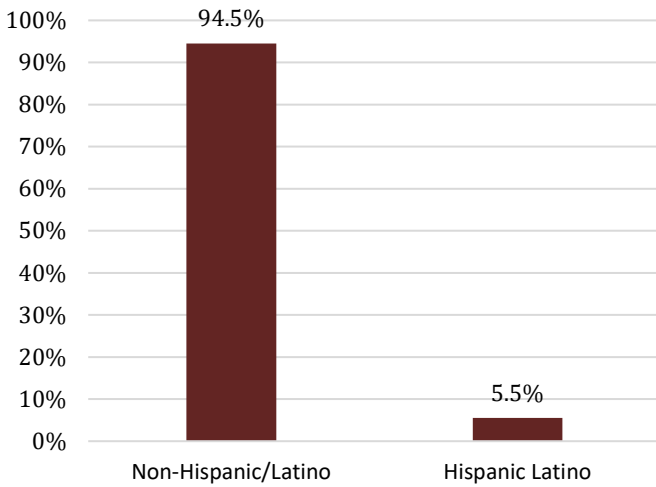


Figure 3. *Ethnicity of participants*

Table 2. *Have you ever been in the care of the State (e.g., foster care, involvement with juvenile justice system)?*

In State's Care	N	Percent
No	29	64.4%
Yes	16	35.6%
Total	45	100%

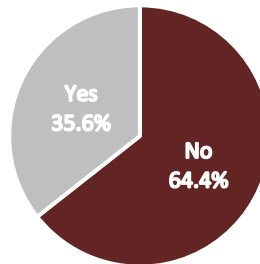
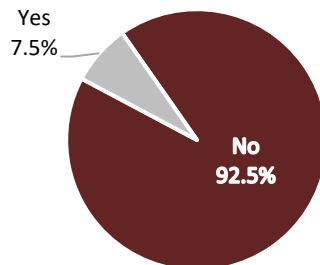


Table 3. *Have you served in the military?*

Veteran	N	Percent
No	49	92.5%
Yes	4	7.5%
Total	53	100%



Homelessness Status

On the night of January 27, 2021, 90.7% of participants reported having slept on the streets or in a homeless camp. The second and third most cited locations were “Abandoned Building” (4.6%) and “Vehicle” (4.6%; Table 6). Most participants (88.1%) reported they were by themselves (Table 7). When asked to add up all the times they had been homeless or unsafely housed over the last 3 years, most participants (67.6%) reported a duration of “a year or more” (Figure 5). Thirty-three percent of participants reported having lived on the streets or in emergency shelters four or more times in the past three years, while 22.8% reported having lived on the streets or in emergency shelters two to three times in the same time period (Figure 6). For 43.9% of participants, this was their first experience living on the streets or in emergency shelters (Figure 6). About half of participants (50.8%) met the criteria for being considered chronically homeless (Table 8).

Table 6. *Where did you sleep on the night of Wednesday, January 27, 2021?*

Locations Where Slept	N	Percent
On Street/Homeless Camp	59	90.7%
Abandoned Building	3	4.6%
Vehicle (Car, Van, RV, Truck)	3	4.6%
Total	65	100%

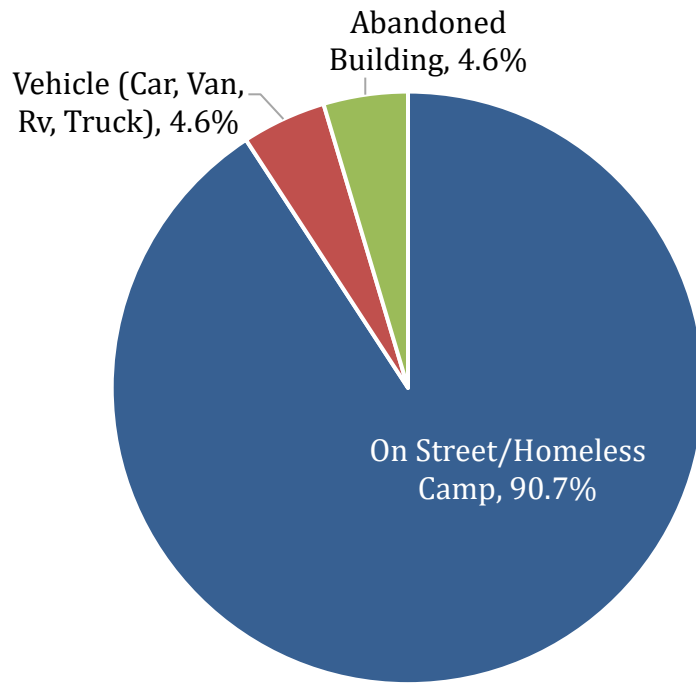
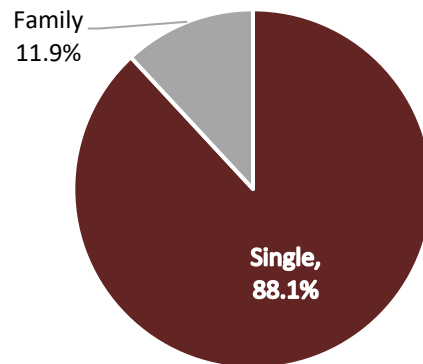


Figure 4. *Locations Where Slept*

Table 7. *Were you by yourself or with a family/household?*

Single or Family	N	Percent
By Myself (Single)	52	88.1%
With Household (Family)	7	11.9%
Total	59	100%



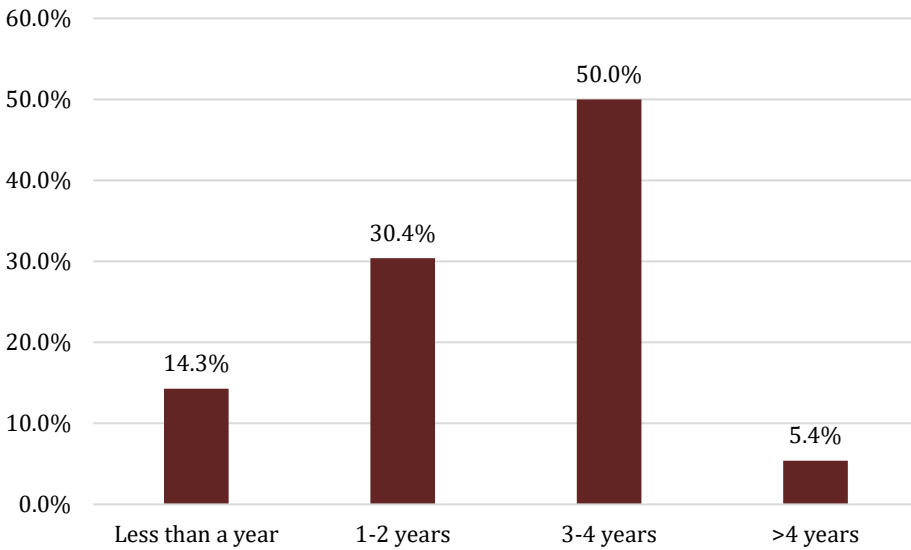


Figure 5. *If you add up all the times you have been homeless or unsafely housed in the last 3 years, about how many days, weeks, months, or years have you been homeless?*

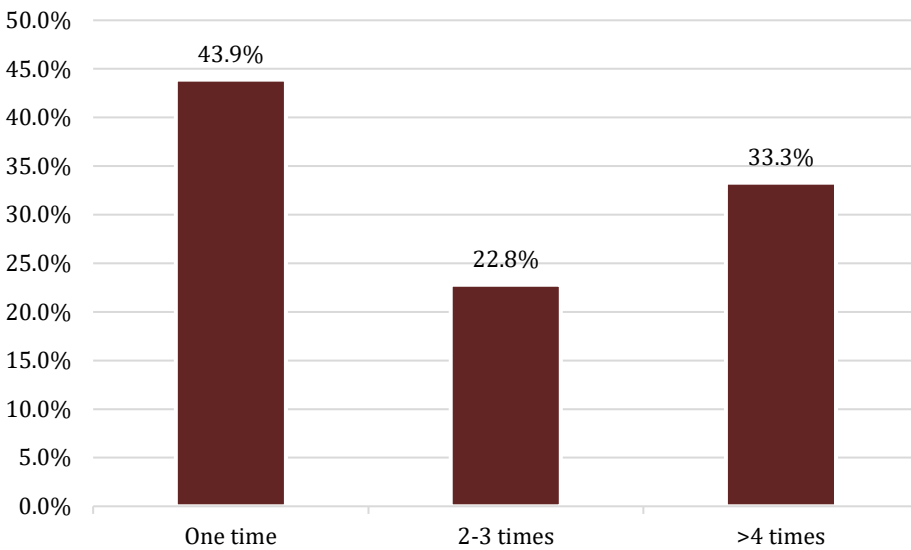
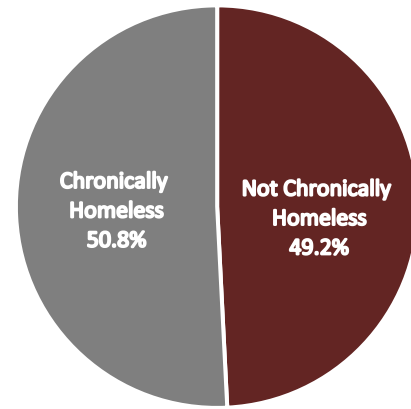


Figure 6. *What is the number of times you have been homeless on the streets or in emergency shelters in the past 3 years?*

Table 8. Chronicity²

Chronicity	N	Percent
Chronically Homeless	30	50.8%
Not Chronically Homeless	29	49.2%
Total	59	100%



Disabling Conditions

Most participants (81.5%) reported having at least one disabling condition (Table 9), although only (18.5%) were receiving disability benefits of any kind (Table 11). A slightly smaller percentage of whites reported having a disability than other racial groups, and a slightly smaller percentage of whites were receiving disability benefits than other racial groups (Table 10 and Table 12). Mental health was the most cited disability (61.4%), followed by physical disability (47.7%), drug abuse (36.4%), alcohol abuse (18.2%), a developmental disability (15.9%), and a chronic health condition (13.6%; Table 13).

Table 9. Do you have a disability?

Disability	N	Percent
Yes	44	81.5%
No	10	18.5%
Total	54	100%

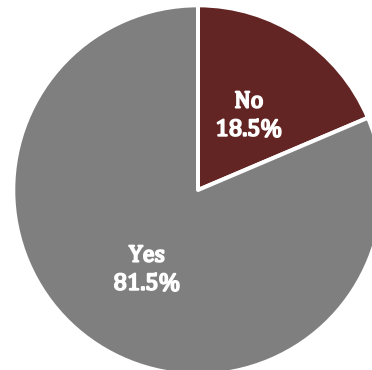


Table 10. Disability Status by Race

	White	Black	American Indian or Alaska Native	Multiple Races
No	17.8%	50.0%	25.0%	17.8%
Yes	82.2%	50.0%	75.0%	82.2%
	N=45	N=2	N=4	N=2

² Criteria for chronicity include having a disability and living in a place not meant for human habitation or emergency shelter for the last 12 months (continuously) OR on at least 4 separate occasions in the last 3 years where those occasions cumulatively total at least 12 months.

Table 11. Do you receive any disability benefits, such as Social Security Income, Social Security Disability Income, or Veterans Disability Benefits?

Benefits	N	Percent
No	37	78.7%
Yes	10	21.3%
Total	47	100%

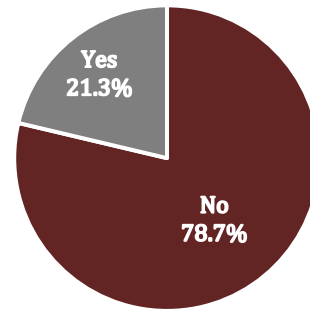


Table 12. Receipt of Disability Benefits, by Race

	White	Black	American Indian or Alaska Native	Multiple Races
No	78.0%	100.0%	66.7%	100%
Yes	22.0%	0.0%	33.3%	0.0%
	N=41	N=2	N=3	N=1

Table 13. Do you have a disability related to any of the following?

Disability Type	N	Percent
Mental health	27	61.4%
Physical	21	47.7%
Drug Abuse	16	36.4%
Alcohol Abuse	8	18.2%
Developmental	7	15.9%
Chronic Health Condition	6	13.6%
Total	85	--

Note. Each respondent may have indicated more than one activity, so percentages add to more than 100%.

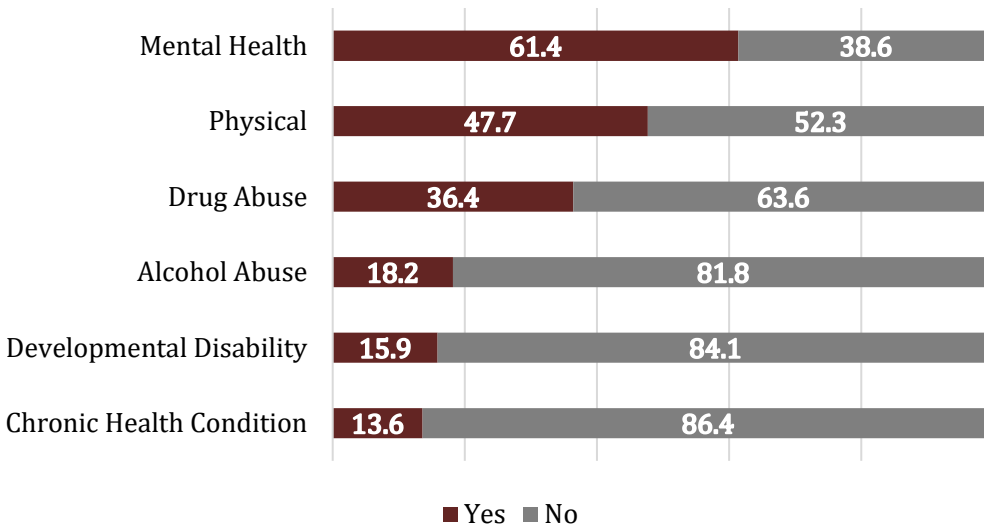


Figure 7. Disability by type

Victimization

Forty-one percent of participants reported having been victims of domestic violence (Table 14); women were more likely to have ever been victims of domestic violence than men (Table 15). Of participants who reported that they had been victims of domestic violence, 5.9% indicated they were currently fleeing (Table 17). Sixty percent of participants reported they had been harmed (physically, emotionally, or sexually) by a relative or another person they stayed with while they were homeless (Table 18). Women were more likely to report having been harmed while homeless than men (Table 20).

Table 14. Have you ever been a victim of domestic violence?

Victim	N	Percent
No	30	58.8%
Yes	21	41.2%
Total	51	100%

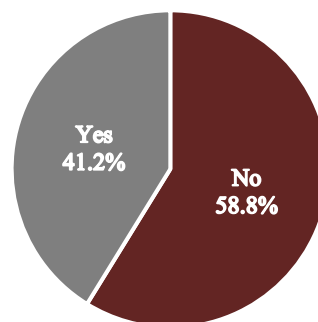


Table 15. Domestic Violence Victimization, by Gender

	Female	Male
No	16.7%	81.8%
Yes	83.3%	18.2%
	N= 18	N= 33

Table 16. Domestic Violence Victimization, by Race

	White	Black	American Indian or Alaska Native	Multiple Races
No	61.0%	100.0%	25.0%	50.0%
Yes	39.0%	0.0%	75.0%	50.0%
	N=41	N=2	N=4	N=2

Table 17. Are you currently fleeing?

Currently Fleeing	N	Percent
No	16	94.1%
Yes	1	5.9%
Total	66	100%

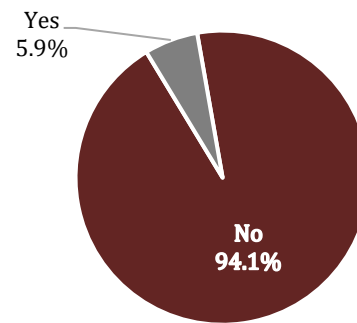


Table 18. Have you ever been harmed (physically, emotionally, or sexually) by a relative or another person you were staying with while you were homeless?

Harmed While Homeless	N	Percent
No	29	60.4%
Yes	19	39.6%
Total	48	100%

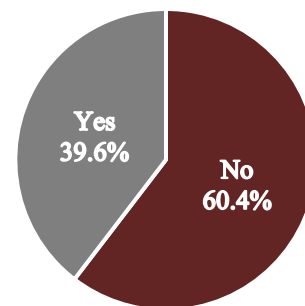


Table 19. Have you ever been harmed, by gender?

	Female	Male
No	37.5%	71.9%
Yes	62.5%	28.1%
	N= 16	N=32

III. Crisis Cold Weather Shelter Summary

Ozarks Alliance to End Homelessness

Crisis Cold Weather Shelters open each winter to expand the number of overnight emergency shelter beds for adults in our community. Shelters are independently operated, but all follow parameters set forth by the City of Springfield's Declaration of Economic and Housing Calamity to ensure health and safety of volunteers/guests as well as best practices established through Community Partnership's Ozarks Alliance to End Homelessness to ensure consistency of service across all sites. All Crisis Cold Weather Shelter sites operated in full compliance with applicable City Codes and health and safety guidelines to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, several shelter sites reduced their individual bed capacity to accommodate appropriate social distancing. However, because new Crisis Cold Weather Shelter sites were able to open this year, no one seeking shelter was turned away due to lack of beds. In previous years three sites provided Crisis Cold Weather Shelter beds. In 2020-2021, eight sites provided ongoing shelter beds over the course of the season. New shelter sites were able to serve couples and people with pets, addressing two reasons people often may not seek shelter. The expanded sites also increase community awareness and volunteer support of Crisis Cold Weather Shelters.

The standard season for operations is November 1 through March 31 when the overnight forecast is at or below 32 degrees (between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 4:00 a.m., as determined by the National Weather Service). During the 2020-2021 season, shelters also opened on the nights of October 29, April 20, and April 21 due to extreme temperatures. Including these additional dates, Crisis Cold Weather Shelters were open 74 nights, providing 5,907 bed nights (includes duplicated numbers served). An average of 80 people were served per night, with the highest use occurring in February (average of 112 people served per night), when there were extended extreme temperatures. Across shelters, approximately 370 unique individuals were served. *Graphs detailing the nights open per month, monthly average served, and individuals served per night are included at the end of this document.* Veterans Coming Home extended its hours over the winter to accommodate the central pick-up site for transportation to Crisis Cold Weather Shelters and nightly meal service. Three meals per day were served at Veterans Coming Home by outreach, advocacy, and community groups, resulting in approximately 250 total meals served per day during the Crisis Cold Weather Shelter season.

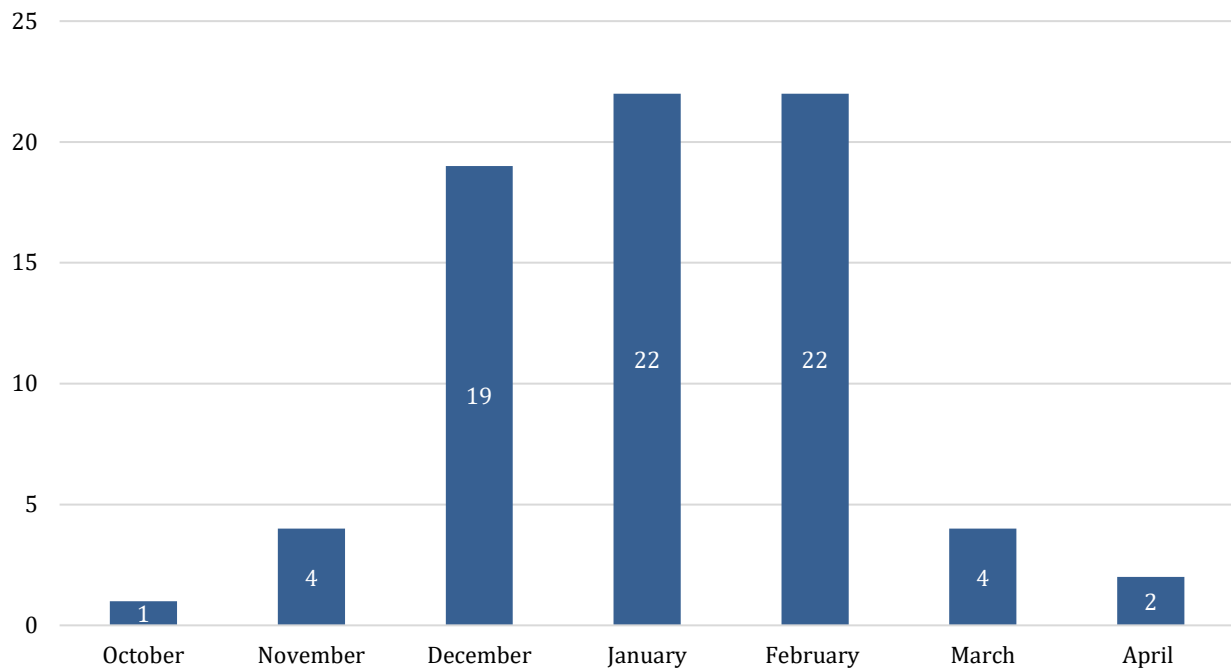
While the host sites themselves played a critical role, other partners—including 100 + community volunteers, City Utilities Transit, Freeway Ministries, and Veterans Coming Home—were integral to this initiative. City Utilities Transit provided free transportation to and from shelter sites, via a designated bus route. Veterans Coming Home extended its hours to serve as the pick-up site for transportation. Shelters were staffed primarily by community volunteers, but some sites were supported by paid staff.

Financial support for Crisis Cold Weather Shelters was provided by the City of Springfield, Community Partnership of the Ozarks, United Way of the Ozarks, and countless community donors.

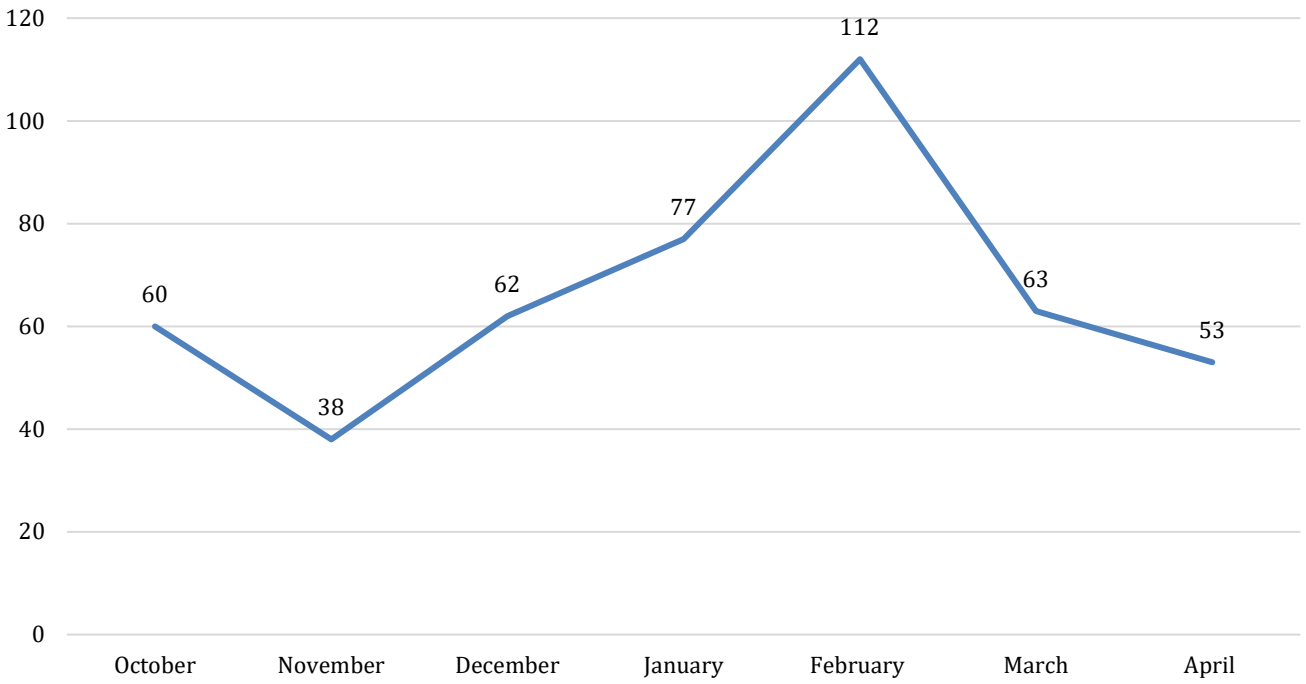
Crisis Cold Weather Shelter sites and their populations served include:

Shelter Site	Population	Time Frame Shelter Provided
East Sunshine Church of Christ	Men	10/29/2020 through season
Hope Church	Men	January 2021
First Unitarian Universalist	Men	12/18/2020 through season
Harbor House	Overflow for Men	1/1/2021 through season
Eden Village (The Gathering Tree)	Overflow for Men and pets	2/12/2021 – 2/21/2021
Revive 66 (The Gathering Tree)	Men, Women, Couples, and pets	2/4/2021 through season
Brentwood Christian Church	Couples and pets	2/1/2021 through season
Grace United Methodist Church	Women	10/29/2020 through season

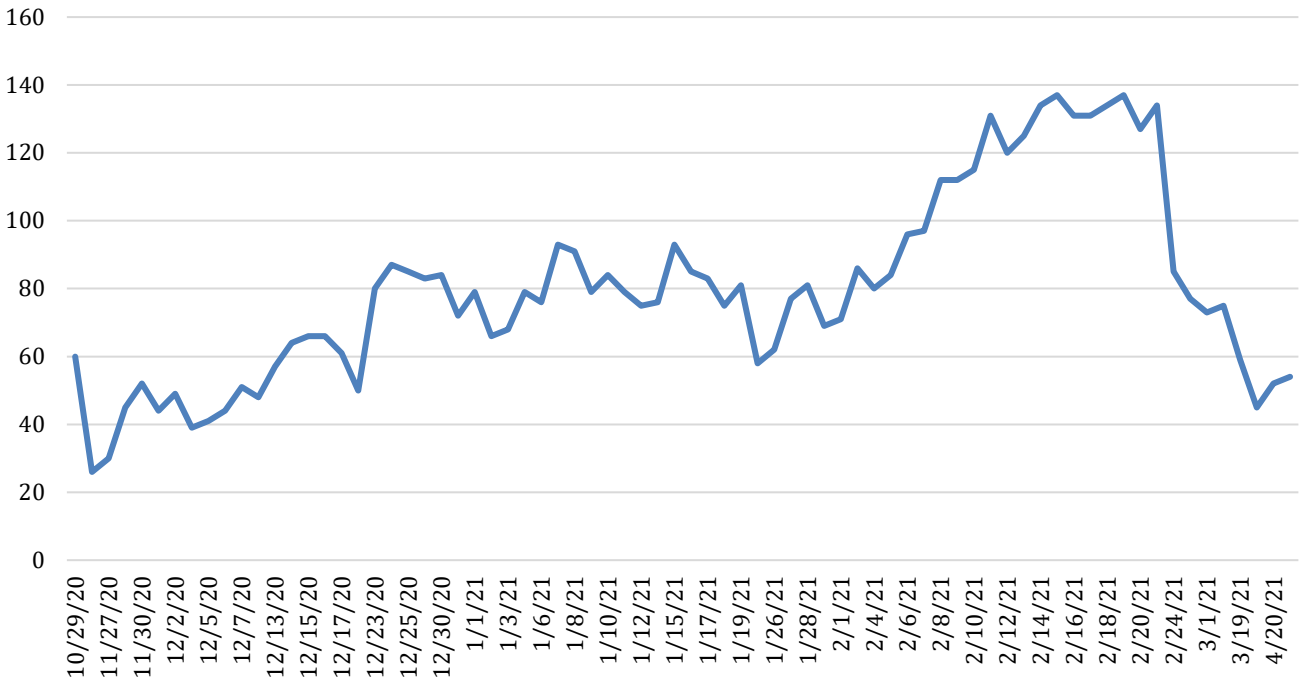
Nights Open Per Month 2020 - 2021



Monthly Average Served Per Night



Individuals Served Per Night



Appendix A: Report Metadata

Report Title:	2021 Unsheltered Point-in-Time Report for Springfield, MO
Project Sponsor:	Ozarks Alliance to End Homelessness
Survey Administrators:	Amanda Stadler and staff at Community Partnership of the Ozarks
Report Authors:	Sarah Skrzypczak, Elizabeth Wertz, Jeanette Lovely, and Jessica Powell, Department of Sociology & Anthropology, Missouri State University
Software Used:	SPSS v. 24 and Excel
Contact:	If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Laura Hart at LHart@missouristate.edu