



# Community Support and Service-Based Count on Rural Homelessness

West Hants to Digby 2022

## Count Overview

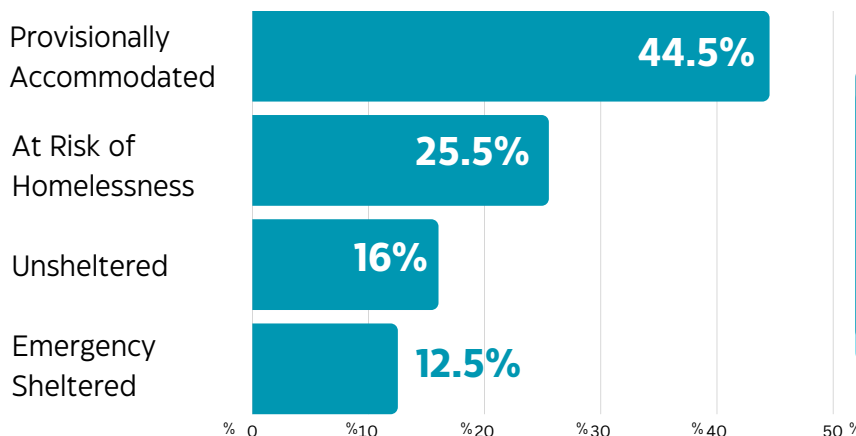
The Community Support and Service-based Count on Rural Homelessness is designed to identify the number of individuals experiencing homelessness, as well as other key demographic information. During the month of November 2022, service providers from West Hants to Digby completed surveys on clients who were 16 years of age or older whom they identified as experiencing homelessness. For each client, a survey was completed based on known demographic and housing situation information. The method used is a non-invasive approach and protects the clients identity, while providing data to help our community understand the scope of homelessness in our region. This Community-Support and Service-Based count used the model developed by NSHA and Cape Breton University in Eastern Nova Scotia and modified it to meet the needs and interests of the community organizations involved in this study site.

## Regional Statistics

With the dedication of 23 community support and service provider organizations between West Hants and Digby, the 2022 Community Support and Service-Based Count identified 231 individuals experiencing some form of homelessness. Rural homelessness is often considered invisible, but this study demonstrates that it exists in our rural and small-town communities. The following regional statistics provide a glimpse at the lived reality of those experiencing some form of homelessness between West Hants and Digby.

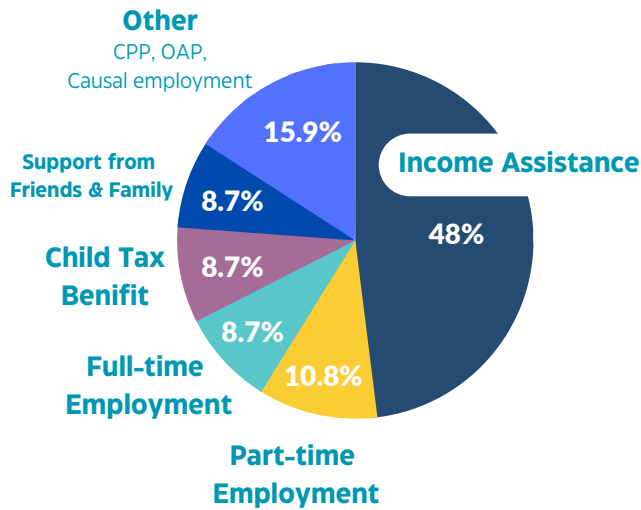


**Types of homelessness are defined by the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness - COH Homeless Definition PDF**



*"They endured unimaginable trauma that has changed them forever. They continue to hold on to hope for housing and a brighter future"*  
- Service Provider

*"All supports are working together, but there are no housing options available for someone their age"*  
- Community support



## Income Statistics

Individuals experiencing homelessness across the region are not all without forms of income. This statistic represents a greater issue that income or income assistance is currently not sufficient when it comes to securing housing. This statistic is further supported when considering what barriers individuals face when accessing housing; the number one answer was that 'Rents are too high'

## Barriers to access housing

These are the top five barriers to accessing and keeping affordable, safe and appropriate housing. People often experience multiple barriers.



## Quick Statistics

- **50.6%** of individuals have strong community connections
- **45.8%** of individuals have access to primary healthcare
- **28.5%** of individuals are between the ages of 20-29
- **10%** of individuals are experiencing sexual exploitation
- **23%** of individuals have been experiencing homelessness for more than **two years**

*"For families with multiple children and pets, it is extremely challenging to find housing and landlords who are willing to rent to you" - Service Provider*



**The results of this study call for immediate and collective action in community and government for more affordable and safe housing across the region.**

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