

Faces of Homelessness, 2011¹

Over the course of this year, it is estimated that between 4,500 and 7,500 individuals will experience homelessness in Indianapolis.

On any given night, more than 1,500 individuals are experiencing homelessness in Indianapolis.

On a single night in January 2011, 1,567 individuals were found and identified as experiencing homelessness in Indianapolis.

Of the 1,567 individuals who were found and identified as experiencing homelessness in Indianapolis on a single night in January 2011, 114 were unsheltered and found on the street.

Of the 1,567 individuals who were found and identified as experiencing homelessness in Indianapolis on a single night in January 2011, 1,453 were staying in emergency shelters or in temporary housing programs.

Many individuals and families become homeless because of a major life event: loss of employment, catastrophic illness, eviction and foreclosure, domestic violence.

Individuals who do not have a home of their own but who are doubled up with others such as friends or extended family are among the individuals who are increasingly falling into homelessness and needing the support of emergency shelter and temporary housing programs. On the night of the 2011 count, 245 of the 1,567 individuals experiencing homelessness were homeless after being asked to leave the home of a friend or extended family member.

Of the 1,567 individuals who were found and identified as experiencing homelessness in Indianapolis on a single night in January 2011, only 168 can be characterized as “chronically homeless,” that is, continuously homeless for one year or longer, or having had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years. Nearly two-thirds of these individuals were staying in shelters or taking part in temporary housing programs.

Many people associate homelessness with panhandling. However, four downtown counts taken in 2008 and 2009 found that **none** of the individuals engaged in illegal panhandling were

¹ These facts are taken from data underlying and/or contained in the April 2011 point-in-time count report prepared by the Indiana University Public Policy Institute. Except when otherwise indicated, “homeless” for the purpose of this count is limited to individuals who are staying in emergency shelter or transitional programs, or who are living in a place not fit for human habitation.

homeless, and even those few individuals who were engaged in legal, passive solicitation (simply holding a sign or cup), represented less than one-half of 1% of the city's more than 1,500 people experiencing homelessness.

On a single night in January 2011, there were 155 families experiencing homelessness in Indianapolis.

Twenty-eight (28%) percent or 444 of the 1,567 individuals experiencing homelessness in Indianapolis on any given night are members of a homeless family.

Sixteen (16%) percent or 248 of the 1,567 individuals experiencing homelessness in Indianapolis on any given night are children under the age of 18.

The average age of a **homeless child** in Indianapolis is seven.

In addition to the 248 children who are homeless and living in emergency shelters or temporary housing programs, Marion County schools report that they are serving another 2,925 children who do not have a home of their own. These children are "doubled up" with friends or extended family, living with an adult in hotels or motels, or are unattached.

Individuals who do not have a home of their own but who are doubled up with others such as friends or extended family are among the individuals who are increasingly falling into homelessness and needing the support of emergency shelter and temporary housing programs. On the night of the 2011 count, 245 of the 1,567 individuals experiencing homelessness were homeless after having been asked to leave the home of a friend or extended family member.

On any given night in Indianapolis, there are more than 3,000 children who do not have a home of their own, either because they are homeless and living in emergency shelters or temporary housing, or because they are staying in hotels or are doubled up with friends and relatives. More than half (63%) of these children who are homeless or who otherwise do not have a home of their own are 12 years old or younger.

Twenty-One (21%) percent of 18 to 24 year olds who are homeless on any given night in Indianapolis were once part of the foster care system.

More than half of the individuals experiencing homelessness in Indianapolis on any given night do not have any type of health insurance.

Nineteen (19%) percent or 257 of the 1,319 adults experiencing homelessness in Indianapolis on any given night suffer from a chronic health condition such as high blood pressure, asthma, diabetes or heart disease. One Hundred and Ninety-Seven reported a physical disability, and 247 reported a developmental disability.

More than 400 individuals experiencing homelessness in Indianapolis on any given night are over the age of 50.

Fifteen (15%) percent of the adults who are homeless in Indianapolis on any given night are employed while they are experiencing homelessness.

The number of individuals who are homeless and employed in Indianapolis on any given night fell from twenty-five (25%) percent in 2009, to nineteen (19%) in 2010, to fifteen (15%) in 2011.

The single greatest reason given for why an individual was experiencing homelessness was that they had lost or could not find a job.

Four Hundred and Fifty-Seven (457) or thirty-five (35%) percent of the adults experiencing homelessness in Indianapolis on any given night cited lost job or inability to find employment as the reason for their homelessness.

Thirteen (13%) percent of the adults who are homeless in Indianapolis on any given night are attending college or are enrolled in other educational and vocational programs while they are experiencing homelessness.

Two Hundred and Sixty-Two (262) adults who are experiencing homelessness on any given night in Indianapolis are veterans.

Twenty (20%) percent of the adults who are experiencing homelessness on any given night in Indianapolis are veterans.

Three Hundred and Ninety (390) adults who are experiencing homelessness on any given night in Indianapolis are women fleeing from domestic violence.

Thirty (30%) percent of the adults who are experiencing homelessness on any given night in Indianapolis are women fleeing from domestic violence.

Five Hundred and Thirty-Five (535) adults who are experiencing homelessness on any given night in Indianapolis suffer from a chronic addiction.

Forty-One (41%) percent of the adults who are experiencing homelessness on any given night in Indianapolis suffer from a chronic addiction.

One Hundred and Eighty (180) adults who are experiencing homelessness on any given night in Indianapolis suffer from a severe mental illness.

Fourteen (14%) percent of the adults who are experiencing homelessness on any given night in Indianapolis suffer from a severe mental illness.

Three Hundred and Sixty-Eight (368) of the adults who are experiencing homelessness on any given night in Indianapolis report a prior felony conviction.

Twenty-Eight (28%) percent of the adults who are experiencing homelessness on any given night in Indianapolis report a prior felony conviction.