



2021 Point in Time Count *and* Housing Inventory Chart

Introduction

Every year, on a single night in January, volunteers and homeless service providers conduct the annual Point in Time (PIT) count of people experiencing homelessness. Simultaneously, a census of available temporary and permanent housing beds for people experiencing homelessness – called the Housing Inventory Chart (HIC) - is undertaken. Together, these data points provide information about the number of people experiencing homelessness and the resources available to shelter and house them, in Delaware and across the nation.

The 2021 PIT Count includes people sleeping in congregate emergency shelters, including cold weather shelters, those temporarily staying in non-congregate hotels/motels, and people sleeping in transitional housing programs for people experiencing homelessness. In 2021, due to COVID-19 logistical concerns and safety risks, an unsheltered homeless count was not conducted in Delaware.

Despite the fact that people sleeping in unsheltered locations, such as encampments, cars, or parks were not included in the 2021 count, the number of people experiencing homelessness in Delaware on the night of the PIT increased by 35%.

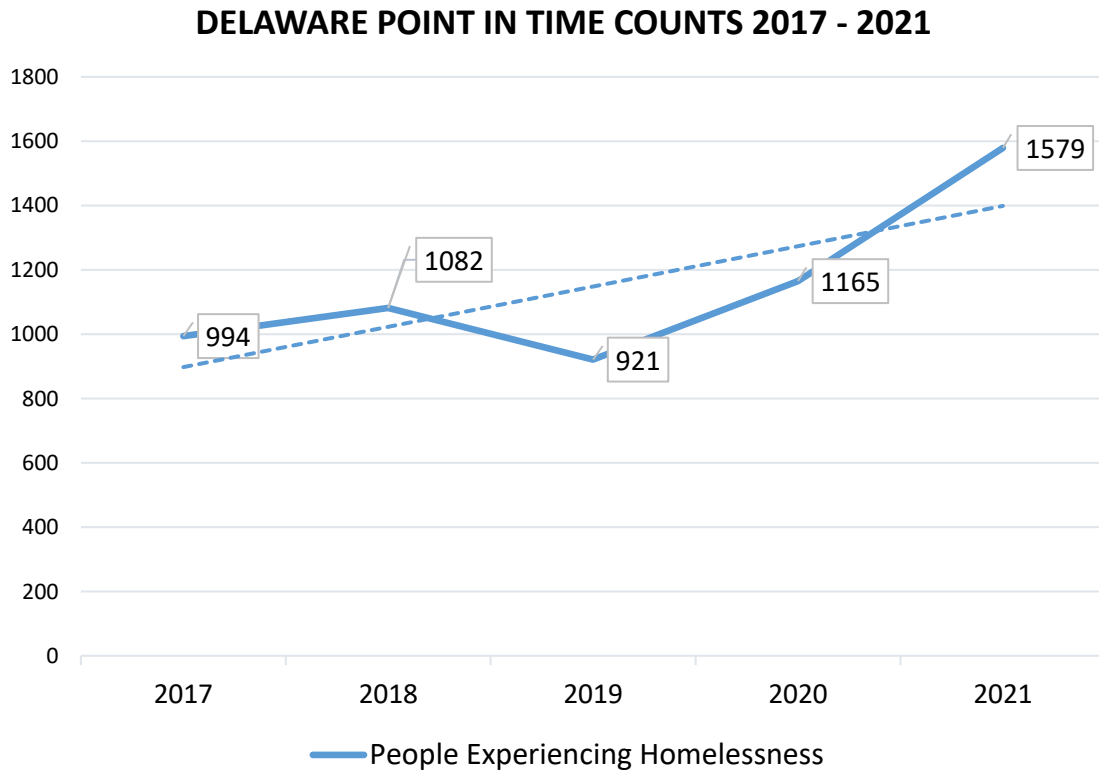
Many changes in the 2021 PIT data can be explained, at least in part, by changes in the methodology (e.g. lack of unsheltered data) and the impact of COVID-19 on the homeless assistance system and our communities.

In 2021 more households than ever were sheltered in hotels and motels through the Division of State Service Centers and non-profit homeless assistance providers. Non-congregate sheltering is recommended by housing and public health experts during the COVID-19 pandemic, as it is far safer than sleeping in a congregate setting during COVID-19. This was especially true in January of 2021 when transmission and hospitalization rates in Delaware were at an all-time high.

Summary of Results

- 1,579 people were experiencing homelessness on the night of the 2021 PIT Count, more than at any other time in the past 5 years.
- Since 2018, the number of people experiencing homelessness in Delaware has increased while homeless shelter and housing resources for people experiencing homelessness have decreased.
- The number of people experiencing homelessness in 2021 increased by 35%, even though an unsheltered count was not conducted.
- The number of families with children experiencing homelessness increased by 87% in 2021, from 136 families in 2020, to 255 families in 2021.
- The number of Rapid Re-Housing beds occupied on the night of the PIT Count increased substantially in 2021, by more than 100 beds.
- In 2021 the geographic locations of people experiencing homelessness change significantly, with a higher percentage of people experiencing homelessness in Kent and Sussex Counties than ever before.

Point in Time Count

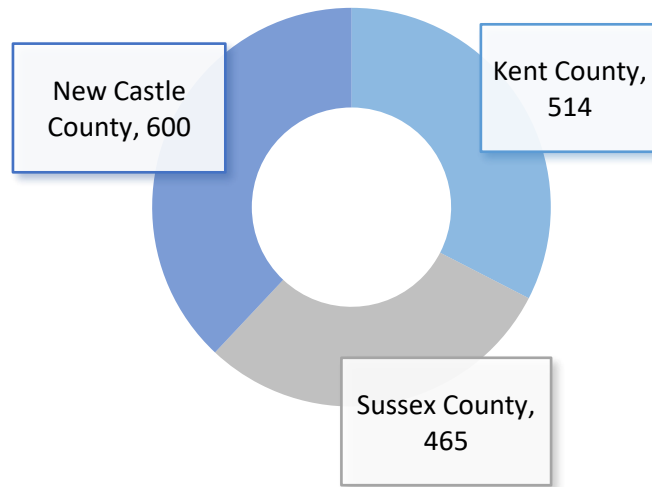


In recent years, nearly 60% of all people experiencing homelessness on the night of the PIT are in New Castle County. In 2021, only 38% of people experiencing homelessness were in New Castle County.

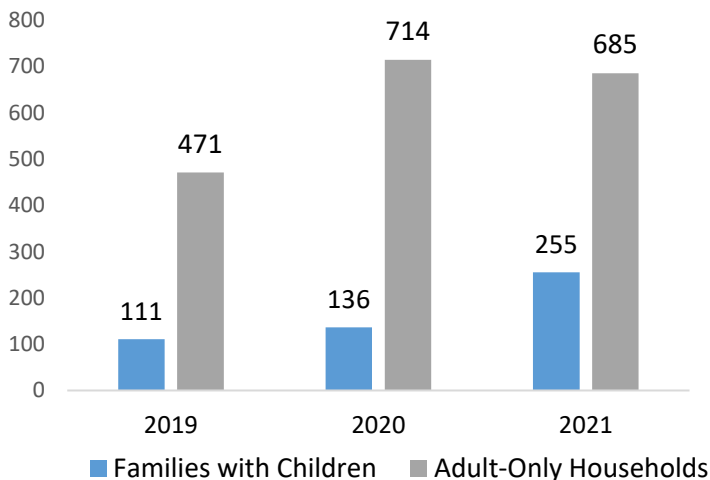
A higher percentage of the homeless population was in Kent and Sussex counties than ever before.

Many homeless households in Kent and Sussex County were staying temporarily in hotels and motels, or sleeping in seasonal cold weather shelters (Code Purple) in 2021.

HOMELESSNESS BY COUNTY, 2021



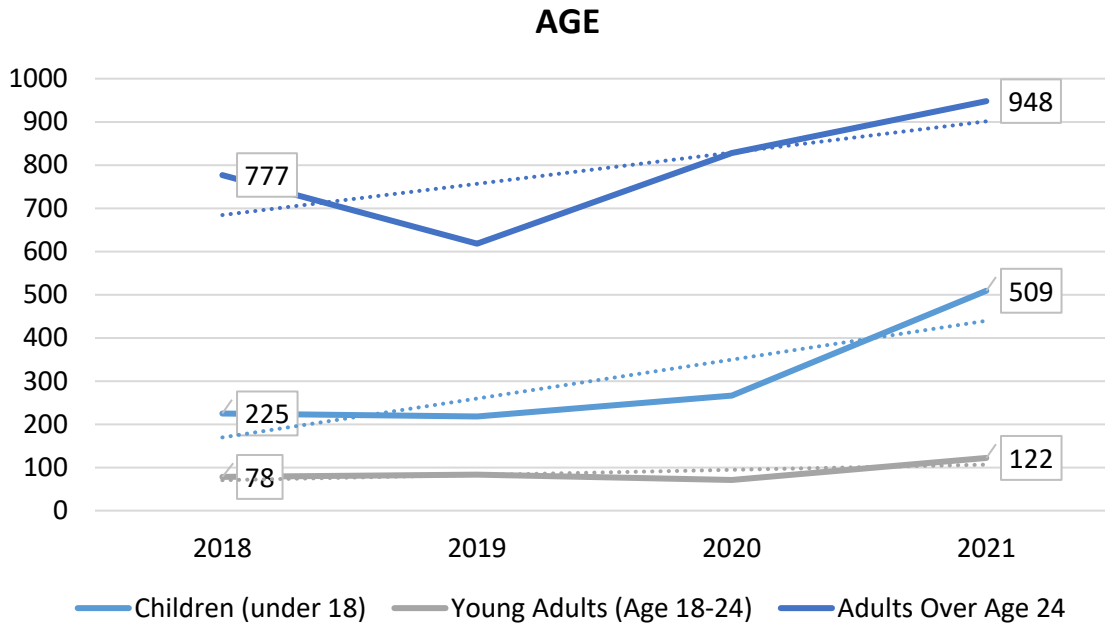
HOUSEHOLD TYPE



The number of adult-only households increased significantly from 2019 to 2020, and then decreased slightly in 2021. The decrease in 2021 is likely due to having not conducted an unsheltered count, as people experiencing unsheltered homelessness are more likely to be adults than families with children.

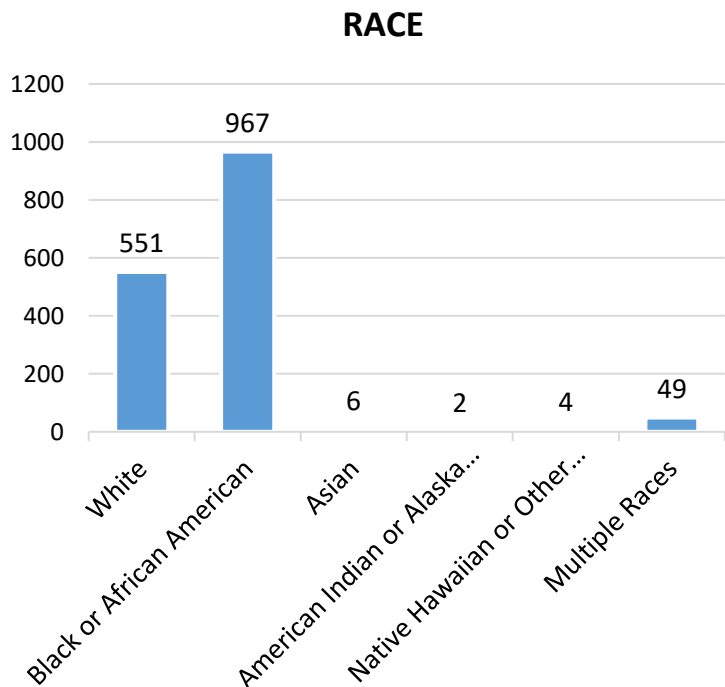
In contrast, the number of families with children increased by 87% from 2020 to 2021. On the night of the 2021 PIT, many homeless families were sleeping in temporary hotel or motel placements due to COVID-19. This year, 839 people were temporarily sheltered in a hotel or motel in Delaware on the night of the PIT compared to 50 people in 2020. Many individuals and families stayed, and continue to stay, in hotels and motels for extended periods of time due to the lack of safe and affordable housing options in our communities.

As the chart below shows, homelessness increased across all age groups since 2018. The number of youth between the ages of 18-24 increased from 78 to 122. The number of adults over the age of 24 increased from 777 to 948.

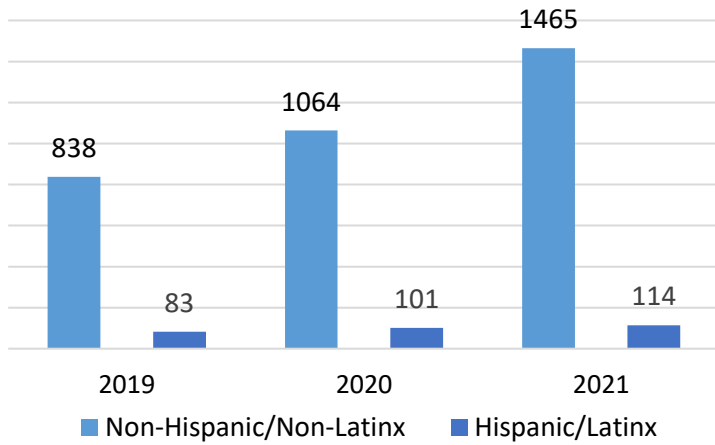


The number of children under the age of 18 increased from 225 children in 2018 to 509 in 2021, almost doubling. Many of the children counted in the 2021 PIT were sleeping in hotels and motels with their families, a shelter option provided in response to COVID-19.

People who identified as Black or African American were the largest racial group in the PIT Count, representing 61% of all people experiencing homelessness on that night. Black people experience homelessness at a much higher rate than whites and other racial groups in Delaware. While 61% of people experiencing homelessness were Black, 22% of Delaware’s population identify as Black.



ETHNICITY



Homelessness disproportionately impacted non-Hispanic/Latinx people and families in 2021.

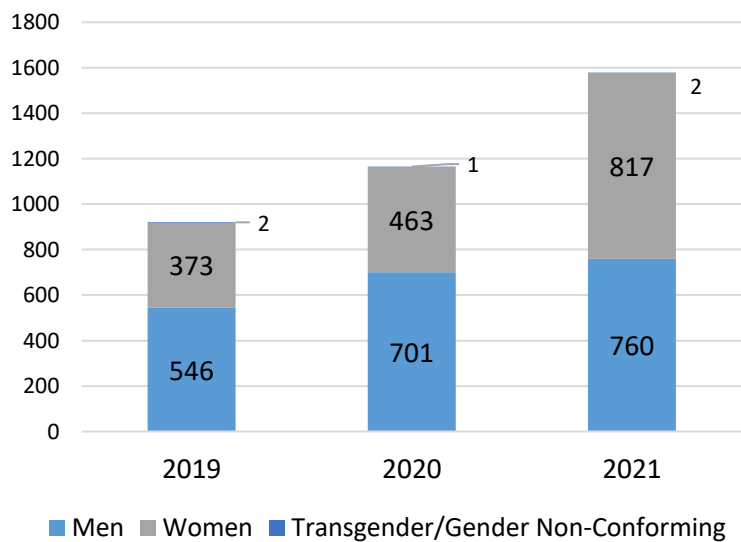
Much of the increase in homelessness in 2021 was people who do not identify as Hispanic or Latinx.

In prior years, males accounted for the majority of the homeless population counted in the PIT. In 2021, 51% of people counted were female (including children). We believe this change is largely due to the changes in methodology, and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

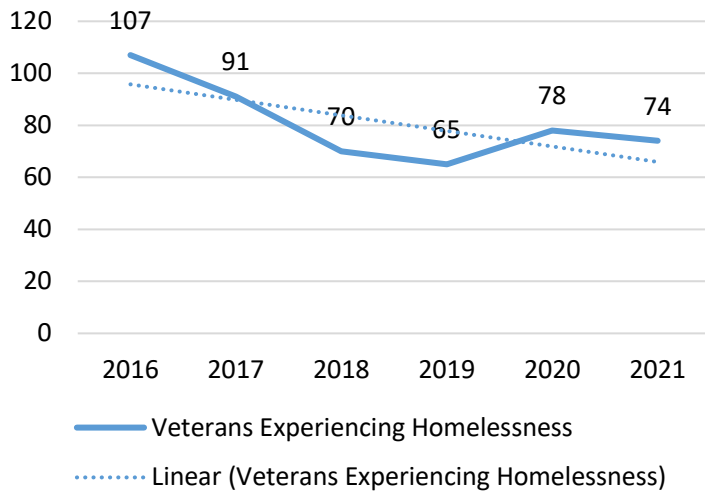
The proportion of the homeless population that is female increased, as did the number of families with children. Homeless families are more likely to be female-headed than male-headed.

Additionally, the exclusion of the unsheltered count likely impacted the gender demographics, as males are often overrepresented in the unsheltered population.

GENDER



HOMELESS VETERANS

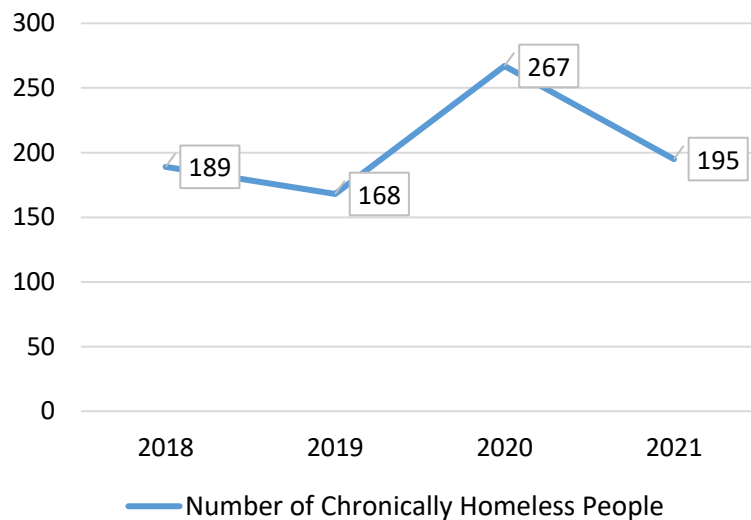


The number of veterans experiencing homelessness in Delaware has decreased since 2016, and has remained fairly consistent, with little change, since 2018.

To be counted as “Chronically Homeless” on the night of the PIT Count, a person or family must meet the HUD definition of chronically homeless.¹

This chart shows change in the chronically homeless population over time. From 2019 to 2020, the number of people experiencing chronic homelessness increased significantly. From 2020 to 2021, the number decreased.

CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS

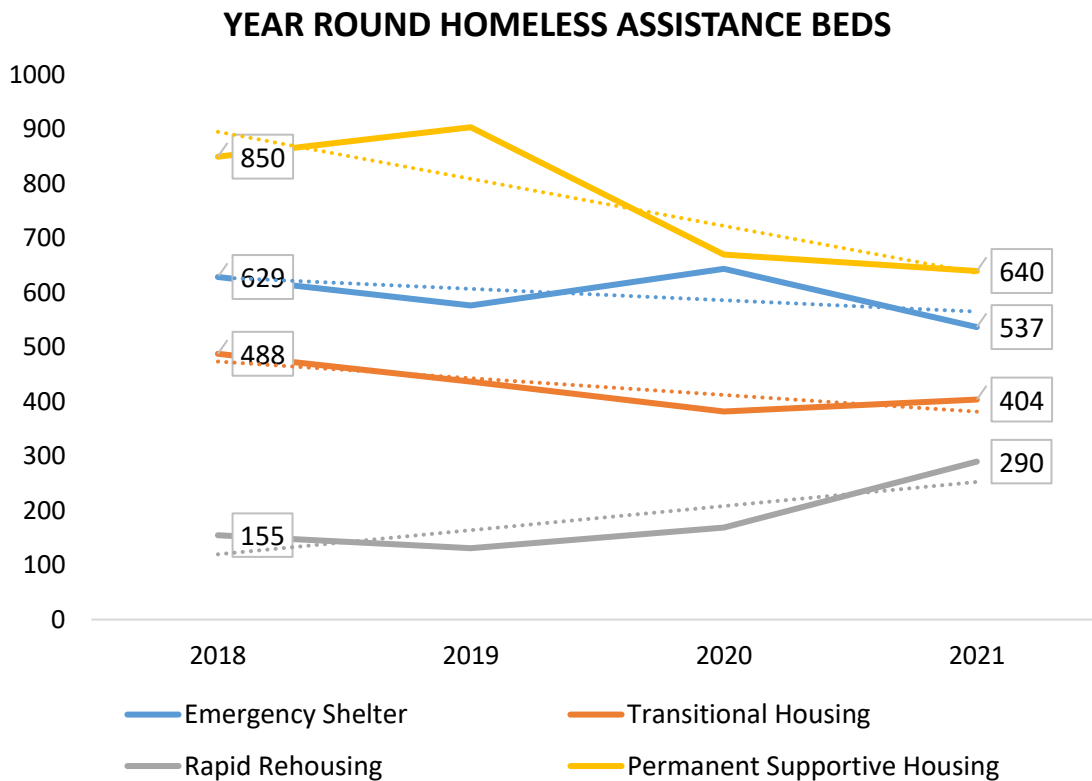


¹ According to the HUD definition, a person who is chronically homeless is: “a homeless individual or head of household with a disability that meets the HUD definition of a disability who (a) lives in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter; AND (b) has been homeless and living in one of these places continuously for at least 12 months OR on at least 4 separate occasions in the last 3 years, as long as the combined occasions equal at least 12 months and each break in homelessness separating the occasions included at least 7 consecutive nights of not living in one of the aforementioned places.”

The decrease in 2021 is likely due to the omission of the unsheltered count, as people experiencing chronic homelessness are more likely than others to experience unsheltered homelessness.

Housing Inventory Chart (HIC)

The Housing Inventory Chart (HIC) is an annual count of beds that are available to people in need. The chart below shows the number of year-round beds counted during each HIC from 2018 to 2021.



Year-round permanent supportive housing (PSH)², transitional housing (TH)³, and emergency shelter (ES)⁴ beds for people and families experiencing homelessness have all decreased since 2018.

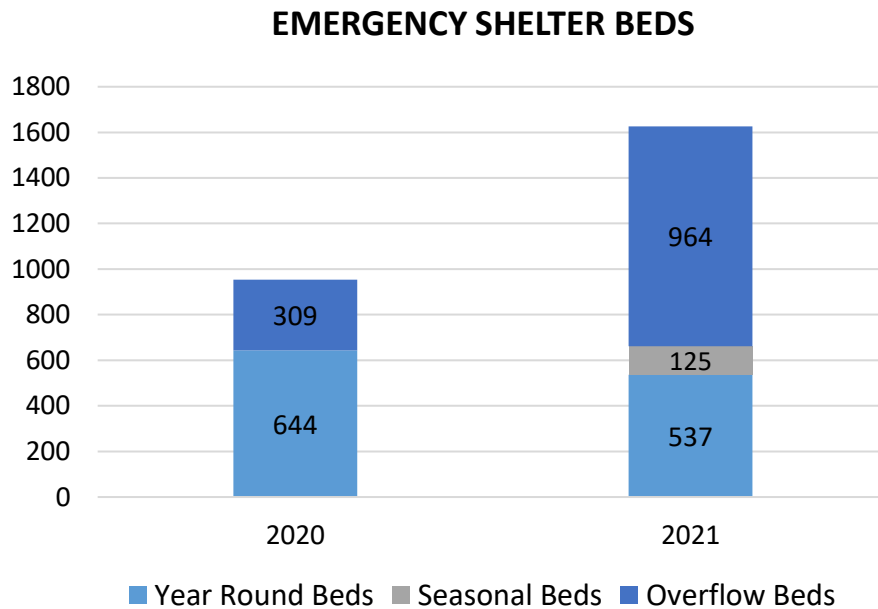
² Permanent Supportive Housing is community-based housing without a designated length of stay in which formerly homeless people with disabilities live as independently as possible. In Delaware, as in much of the country, PSH is targeted to serve people and families experiencing chronic homelessness.

³ Transitional housing is designed to provide homeless individuals and families with medium-term temporary housing.

⁴ Emergency Shelter is any facility (church, non-profit, hotel/motel) for which the primary purpose is to provide a temporary emergency shelter for the homeless in general, or for specific sub-populations (e.g. families, women, etc).

Additionally, emergency shelter bed utilization was at an all-time low of 48% on the night of the 2021 PIT. In other words, more than half of congregate emergency shelter beds in Delaware were not occupied. This was due to CDC recommended COVID-safety protocols put in place in congregate shelter settings to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Many homeless people and families were sheltered in hotel or motels, or not sheltered at all.

The number of rapid rehousing beds (RRH⁵) increased by over 100 beds from 2020 to 2021, and has consistently increased since 2018. In 2021, more households with children were housed in a RRH program on the night of the PIT than in any other year.



Due to COVID-19 and cold weather on the night of the 2021 PIT Count, seasonal emergency shelter beds (cold weather beds) and overflow emergency shelter beds (which are mostly, though not exclusively, hotel/motel rooms), increased in 2021 by more than three-fold. In 2020, there was no Code Purple. And in 2021, hotel and motel sheltering was used by the State of Delaware and nonprofit agencies as a safe alternative to congregate sheltering during COVID-19.

⁵ Rapid Re-Housing is a short to medium term housing program that helps homeless people and families find rental housing, provides temporary financial assistance (rent, utilities, move-in costs, etc.) and supportive services.