

COMMUNITY HOMELESSNESS REPORT SUMMARY

City of Ottawa
2019-2020 and 2020-2021

COORDINATED ACCESS AND HOMELESSNESS MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM (HMIS) SELF-ASSESSMENT

SUMMARY

The table below provides a summary of the work the community has done so far to implement Reaching Home's minimum requirements for Coordinated Access and an HMIS.

How many of the Reaching Home minimum requirements has the community:

| Met | Started | Not yet started |
|-----|---------|-----------------|
| 16 | 2 | 0 |

SUMMARY COMMENT

Are there particular efforts and/or issues that you would like to highlight for this reporting period related to your community's work to achieve the Reaching Home minimum requirements? In particular, please describe your community's efforts to set-up or improve the Coordinated Access governance structure, including processes to ensure that policies and protocols, as approved by the governance group(s), are being implemented across the system as intended to achieve desired results.

Regarding each of Reaching Home's CA and HIFIS requirements, the City either already complies, or is working on becoming compliant. The pandemic has caused delays as the community focused on its crisis response. However, a 10-Year Plan Workplan was approved by City Council in February 2021 that will be implemented by the end of term of Council in 2022, in which the requirements for Coordinated Access are included.

In the sections of that plan related to integrating services and coordinating access, the work plan includes:

- consulting the community on the expansion of Coordinated Access
- expanding coordinated access in the homelessness services system with access points for housing benefits and community housing
- mapping the system to increase coordination, reduce gaps and minimize duplication
- expanding the use of HIFIS to agencies delivering homelessness programs (in addition to the current users: emergency shelters)
- reviewing the Community Entity (CE) and the Community Advisory Board (CAB) functions for Reaching Home (funding) program as well as the City's role as the Community Entity. Currently the City and a community partner co-chair the Community Advisory Board. (2.1 and 2.2)

In addition to the "Yes" or "Under Development" responses provided above:

(2.1 and 2.2) Governance re Coordinated Access and HIFIS Expansion:

The City's Housing Services collaborates with the community in its administration of HIFIS and Coordinated Access for Housing First services. Since 2015, when Coordinated Access to Housing First services was first implemented in Ottawa, the governance structure has been evolving to meet the needs of the sector. The City facilitates the following groups: the Housing First Leadership Group, the Adult Housing-based Case Management Working Group, the Youth Coordinated Access Working Group, the Supportive Housing Working Group, the Street Outreach Coalition, the Housing Specialists Working Group and the HIFIS Working Group.

However, the current governance structure will be restructured in 2022 to fully meet the Reaching Home requirements. All current policies and protocols will be reviewed by the new governance structure for Coordinated Access.

The Reaching Home program has provided standards for Coordinated Access and use of a Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) that Reaching Home-funded communities must comply with by March 2022. The City already complies with many of the requirements however the following ones are being updated as outlined in the points below. The City plans to be in full compliance with all the requirements listed in the questions above by March 2022.

Compliance of all Reaching Home-funded agencies: (2.3 and 2.14) All service providers receiving Reaching Home funding will be using HIFIS, participating in Coordinated Access and included in the Resource Inventory by the end of March 2022. The Resource Inventory is an inventory of housing resources for which access is being formally coordinated (e.g. housing units, rent subsidies, case managers).

Currently, Coordinated Access is limited to Housing First programs and some supportive housing programs, mainly those created since 2014. The Reaching Home-funded programs not yet integrated into Coordinated Access are the Salvation Army's rooming house program, Tewegan's Housing for Aboriginal Youth, and all four adult shelters' Shelter To Housing Case Management services.

Homeless Management Information System (Homeless Individuals & Families Information System or HIFIS)

(2.5) A new data Provision agreement has been signed between ESDC and the City. The new sub-agreements with the agencies are in progress and will be completed once the agencies are being brought into HIFIS in the fall of 2021. (Req 2.4)

(2.6) A new privacy agreement is currently being developed through the City's privacy office, based on consultations with the agencies. It will be ready on time.

Access Points to Service

(2.8) There are currently 16 access sites throughout the City but these will be reviewed and increased during the coming months as part of the HIFIS expansion initiative.

Triage and Assessment

(2.11) There is currently a triage process in place for people seeking emergency shelter. A triage assessment determines if people can be diverted from entering shelter and provided with general housing assistance. If people cannot be diverted, a more in-depth assessment is completed to prioritize and match people to housing support services based on their needs and choice in housing, including Housing-based Case Management support or intensive supportive housing.

For individuals, diversion and Intake Services will be provided to "new" and "returning" clients accessing shelter services at the adult emergency shelter. "Returning" clients are defined as being clients who have returned to shelter following a period of 90 days or more from housing, transiency, incarceration, treatment or hospitalization etc. Successful diversions will result in the reduction of shelter stays between zero and seven days. For those who cannot be diverted, a more in-depth assessment is completed to prioritize and match people to housing support services based on their needs and choice in housing. These include Housing First supports or supportive housing. Each client's acuity of issues (assessed as high, moderate or low) determines the type, intensity and duration of supports required to help them become housed and retain that housing over the long term. This process will be reviewed and improved as needed, during the onboarding of the new agencies to HIFIS and CA.

Triage of Families: During business hours, families experiencing homelessness in Ottawa contact Employment and Social Services (ESS) to apply for benefits including Ontario Works. A financial and homelessness assessment/application is completed; ESS works directly with staff from the City of Ottawa Family Shelter to collaborate and assess for a homelessness placement. After-hours intake and assessment for placement services for families experiencing homelessness is done by staff at the City of Ottawa Family Shelter. In all cases, options to shelter are explored for either safe diversion, repatriation

and/or the use of Housing Benefits to pay arrears so households could maintain their housing.

(2.12) A common tool is used for these assessments entitled Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (SPDAT). This tool has several versions that are either for triage or are more in-depth, and they are tailored to specific clienteles such as adults, youth, families, etc. At the request of Indigenous service providers, this tool is not used for Indigenous clients in Ottawa.

The Indigenous community does not use the same assessment tool as mainstream agencies due to intersectionality. Indigenous populations face disproportionate rates of exposure to trauma and oppression, that requires trauma informed culturally appropriate methods that are not achievable by the current available tools. While the national Indigenous assessment tool is being developed the Indigenous community uses their own prioritization criteria that was developed by the Aboriginal CAB.

Vacancy Matching and Referral

(2.13) Policies and protocols are in place for referring and matching eligible, prioritized clients to available spaces. Potential clients are referred to Coordinated Access by Shelter To Housing Case Managers, street outreach workers, and by in-reach workers to prisons. Referrals are also made by youth-serving drop-in programs, in-reach into the education system (John Howard Society refers clients from Ottawa schools), in-reach into hospitals, and by hospital social workers. Prior to referring clients, workers assist the client to complete income tax submissions, to apply to be on the Social Housing Registry's wait list, to set up a repayment agreement if the client has social housing arrears, and to apply for income assistance. The referring worker explains the program to the client in detail, including the requirement for regular home visits, integration with other community-based resources, and the requirement for direct rent payment of any housing allowance and rental allowance from provincial benefits. This allows the client to make an informed choice on whether to apply to participate in Housing First or supportive housing. If so, the workers conduct an assessment using the SPDAT tool. Indigenous clients are referred to an Indigenous agency for the explanation of this program and for assessment, which will not include the SPDAT tool. Applicants with a high or moderate "acuity rating" on their assessment who also meet other criteria such as length of time homeless are then added to the prioritization list. A separate but similar process is used for youth.

Once Coordinated Access has matched a client to a vacancy in a program that meets their specific needs, a "warm transfer" meeting is held including the client and a worker from the referring and receiving agency. If the client agrees, the referral is completed.

What is the date range for available data from the List for this fiscal report?

- First date in reporting period:
- Last date in reporting period:

2019-04-01

2020-03-31

Complete the Population Groups table below using the date range indicated for this fiscal report.

| Number of unique individuals (or households where not available) in each Priority Population Group who: | | | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|---|--|--|
| Priority Population Groups | Were homeless (Measures Cumulative Homelessness) | Were new to homelessness (Measures Inflow) | Returned to homelessness from housing (one or more times) (Measures Inflow) | Returned to homelessness from transitional status (one or more times) (Measures Inflow) | Returned to homelessness from unknown status (one or more times) (Measures Inflow) | State changed from inactive to active (one or more times) (Measures Inflow) |
| Overall homeless | 8619 | 3965 | 436 | 28 | 1980 | Not Available |
| Chronically homeless | 1986 | 829 | 26 | Not Available | 84 | Not Available |
| Indigenous peoples | 747 | 251 | 28 | — | 325 | Not Available |
| Priority Population Groups | | | Moved from homelessness to housing (one or more times) (Measures Outflow) | Status changed from homelessness to transitional (one or more times) (Measures Outflow) | Status changed from homelessness to unknown (one or more times) (Measures Outflow) | State changed from active to inactive (one or more times) (Measures Outflow) |
| Overall homeless | | | 432 | 22 | 747 | Not Available |
| Chronically homeless | | | 113 | Not Available | 550 | Not Available |
| Indigenous peoples | | | 18 | — | 74 | Not Available |

Complete the Prior Living Situations table below for all individuals (or households where not available) that were homeless for the date range indicated for this fiscal report.

| | Public Institutions | Transitional Housing | Permanent Housing | Unknown | Total |
|--------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|-------------------|---------|-------|
| New to homelessness | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3965 | 3965 |
| Returned to homelessness | 19 | 9 | 436 | 1980 | 2444 |
| Total | 19 | 9 | 436 | 5945 | 6409 |

COMMUNITY-LEVEL DATA for 2020-2021

What is the date range for available data from the List for this fiscal report?

- First date in reporting period: 2020-04-01
- Last date in reporting period: 2021-03-31

Complete the Population Groups table below using the date range indicated for this fiscal report.

| Number of unique individuals (or households where not available) in each Priority Population Group who: | | | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|---|--|--|
| Priority Population Groups | Were homeless (Measures Cumulative Homelessness) | Were new to homelessness (Measures Inflow) | Returned to homelessness from housing (one or more times) (Measures Inflow) | Returned to homelessness from transitional status (one or more times) (Measures Inflow) | Returned to homelessness from unknown status (one or more times) (Measures Inflow) | State changed from inactive to active (one or more times) (Measures Inflow) |
| Overall homeless | 6790 | 2348 | 350 | 48 | 1591 | Not Available |
| Chronically homeless | 1740 | 1090 | 28 | Not Available | 186 | Not Available |
| Indigenous peoples | 625 | 204 | 39 | 8 | 283 | Not Available |
| Priority Population Groups | | | Moved from homelessness to housing (one or more times) (Measures Outflow) | Status changed from homelessness to transitional (one or more times) (Measures Outflow) | Status changed from homelessness to unknown (one or more times) (Measures Outflow) | State changed from active to inactive (one or more times) (Measures Outflow) |
| Overall homeless | | | 2841 | 1965 | 4902 | 28 |
| Chronically homeless | | | 1386 | 949 | 1326 | 8 |
| Indigenous peoples | | | 117 | 211 | 585 | 8 |

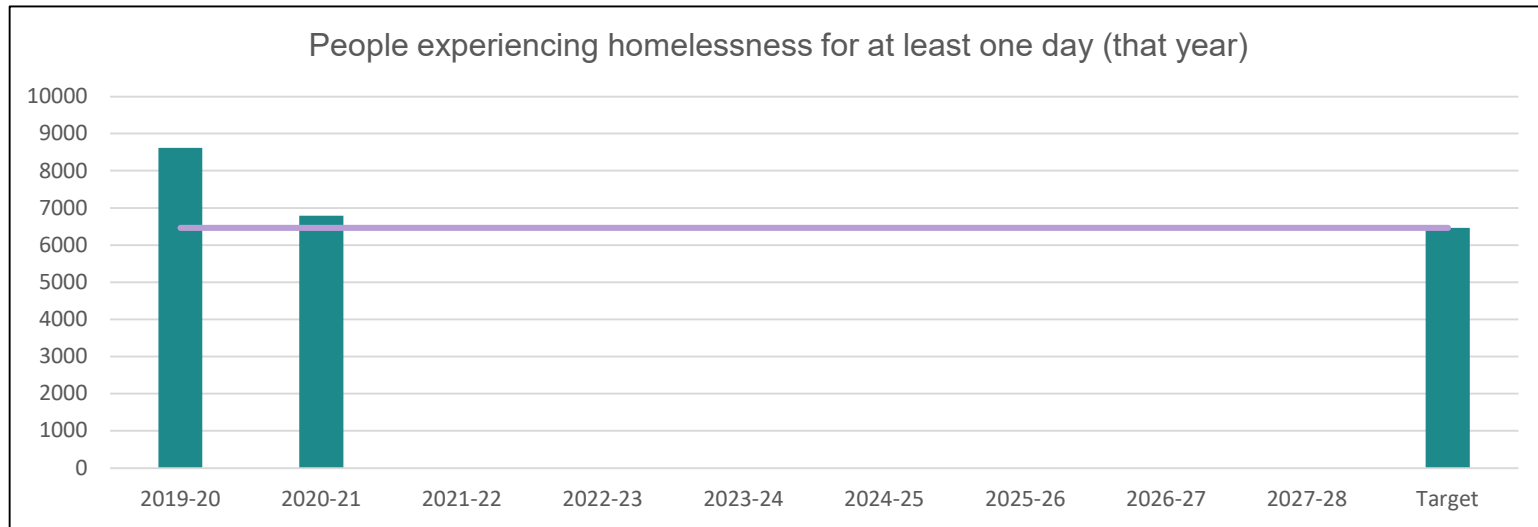
Complete the Prior Living Situations table below for all individuals (or households where not available) that were homeless for the date range indicated for this fiscal report.

| | Public Institutions | Transitional Housing | Permanent Housing | Unknown | Total |
|--------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|-------------------|---------|-------|
| New to homelessness | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2348 | 2348 |
| Returned to homelessness | 19 | 29 | 350 | 1591 | 1989 |
| Total | 19 | 29 | 350 | 3939 | 4337 |

COMMUNITY-LEVEL RESULTS OUTCOMES - CORE OUTCOMES

Outcome # 1: Fewer people experience homelessness overall (homelessness is reduced overall)

| | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 | 2024-25 | 2025-26 | 2026-27 | 2027-28 | Target |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------|
| People experiencing homelessness for at least one day (that year) | 8619 | 6790 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 6464 |



In 2020-21, the shelter system saw an overall decrease of 21.2% in the number of people accessing services. This decrease can be attributed to several factors related to COVID-19, including:

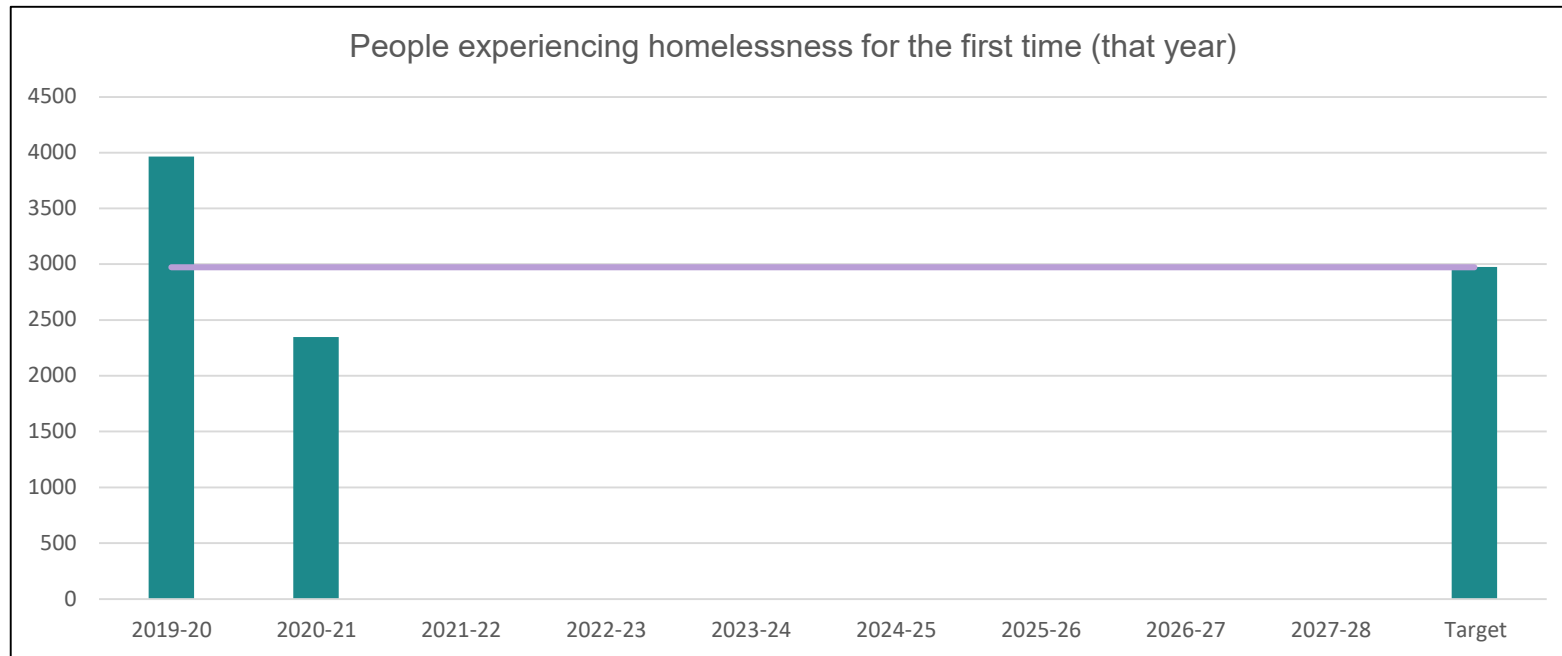
- The closure of Canada-US border, which reduced the number of refugee claimants
- Various stay-at-home orders that reduced migration and relocation within Canada, particularly between provinces
- Adult shelters offering congregate living space report that individuals feared entering the shelter system due to the pandemic. Individuals exiting hospital and correctional systems would previously access shelter while other options could be found. In

2020-2021 however, this population of provisionally accommodated avoided shelter and COVID-specific physical distancing centres and opted to live on the street instead. This trend did result in an increase in the unsheltered population over the course of 2020-2021 from approximately 70-90 pre-pandemic to 226 at the height of the pandemic.

- The suspension of residential evictions that was passed by the provincial government
- Individuals having access to more income through emergency programs such as Canada Emergency Response Benefit

Outcome #2: Fewer people experience homelessness for the first time (new inflows into homelessness are reduced)

| | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 | 2024-25 | 2025-26 | 2026-27 | 2027-28 | Target |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------|
| People experiencing homelessness for the first time (that year) | 3965 | 2348 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 2974 |



Target reduction of 25% from 2019-2028

Consistent with the overall reduction in homelessness, our community has experienced a 41% reduction in the number of new individuals accessing the shelter system during the pandemic, far exceeding the 9-year target of 25%. The drivers and factors that led to this unprecedented decrease are described in the above section, 4.12.

Outcome #3: Fewer people return to homelessness from housing (returns to homelessness are reduced)

| | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 | 2024-25 | 2025-26 | 2026-27 | 2027-28 | Target |
|--|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------|
| Returns to homelessness from housing (that year) | 436 | 350 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 327 |

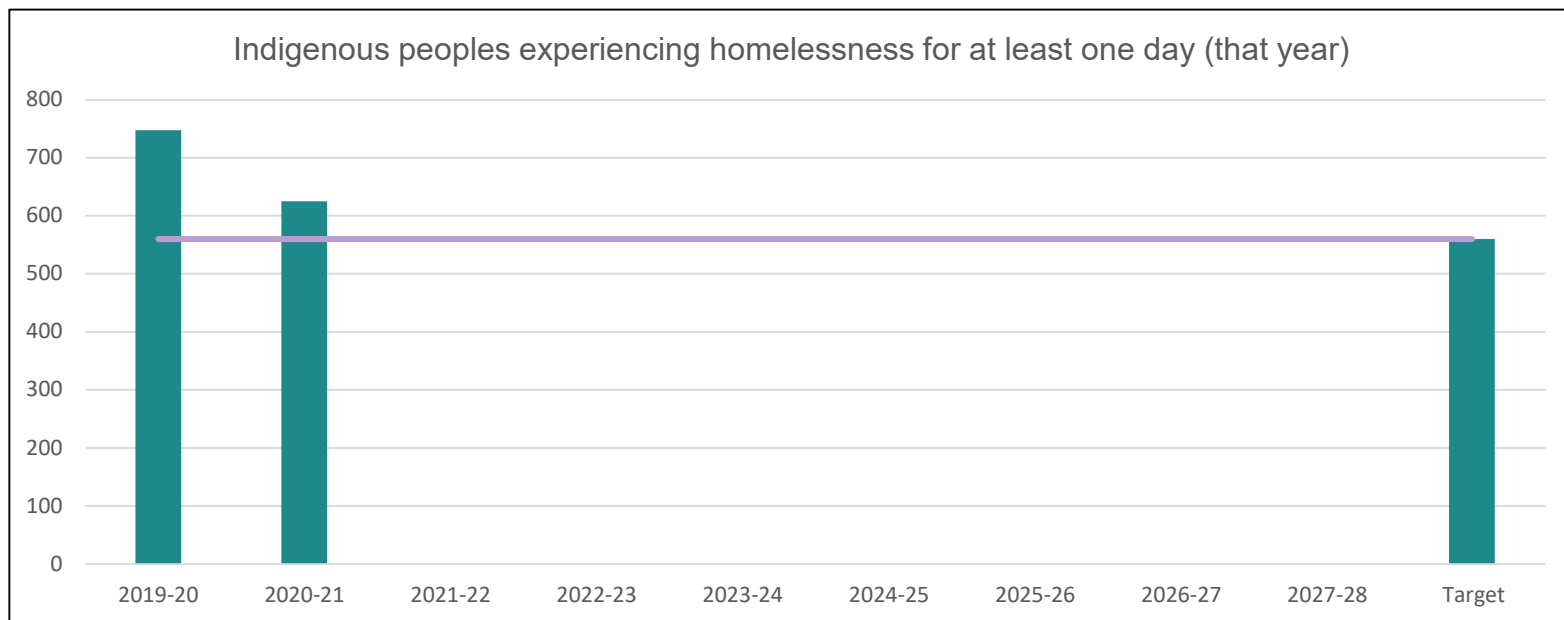


Target reduction of 25% from 2019-2028

Consistent with the overall reduction in homelessness, our community has experienced an 19.8% reduction in the number of people returning to the shelter system during the pandemic. The drivers and factors that led to this notable decrease are described in the above section, 4.12.

Outcome #4: Fewer Indigenous peoples experience homelessness (Indigenous homelessness is reduced)

| | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 | 2024-25 | 2025-26 | 2026-27 | 2027-28 | Target |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------|
| Indigenous peoples experiencing homelessness for at least one day (that year) | 747 | 625 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 560 |



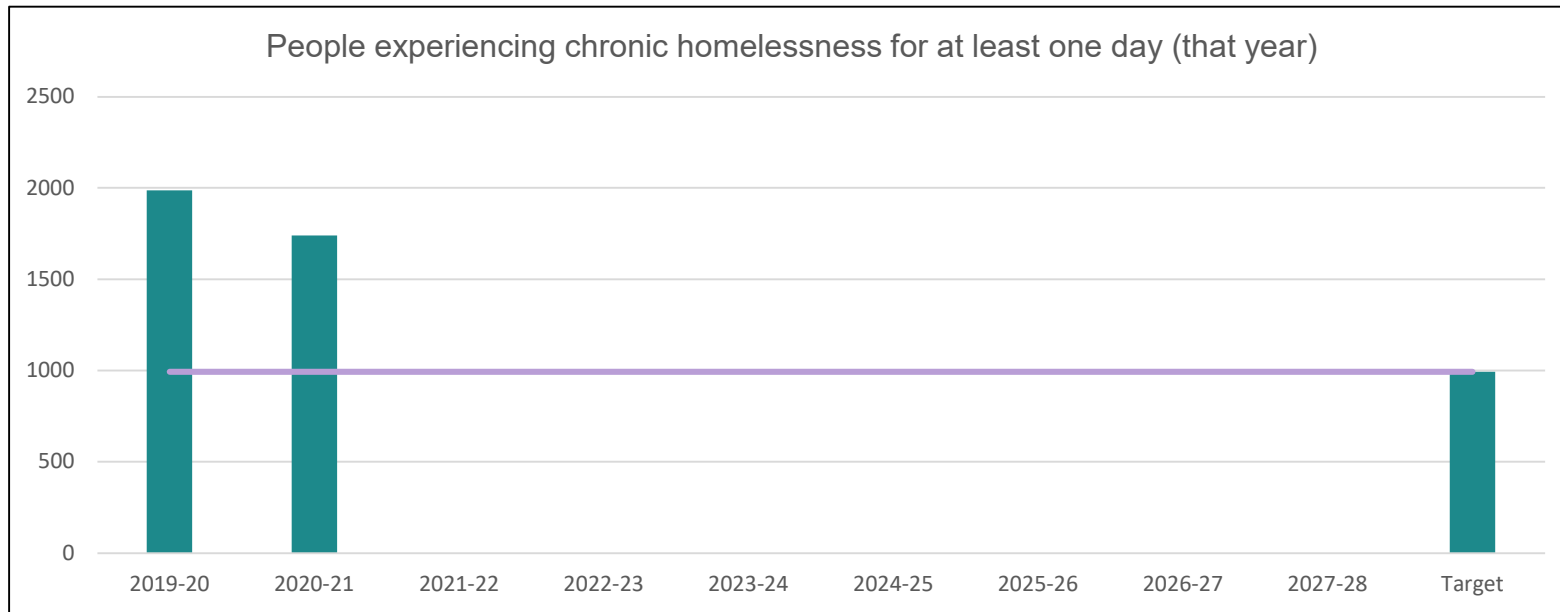
Target reduction of 25% from 2019-2028

The City's Coordinated Access system is integrated with Indigenous Coordinated Access regarding Housing First and

supportive housing. Information sharing between the two systems is key to its success. The above statistics are from individuals who self-identified as Indigenous, in the HIFIS database. The shelters work continuously to improve and update this data. In-reach to the shelters from Indigenous partners has helped with identifying more people as Indigenous and offering them the supports they need to be more successful in their housing. The decrease of 16.3% in the number of Indigenous Peoples accessing shelters in 2020-21 could be an effect of the pandemic that is described in the above section, 4.12.

Outcome #5: Fewer people experience chronic homelessness (chronic homelessness is reduced)

| | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 | 2024-25 | 2025-26 | 2026-27 | 2027-28 | Target |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------|
| People experiencing chronic homelessness for at least one day (that year) | 1986 | 1740 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 993 |



Target is to reduce chronic homelessness by 50% by 2028, with a complete elimination by 2030 as part of the City's 10-Year Plan. Consistent with the decrease in overall homelessness, chronic homelessness as decreased by 12.4% in 2020-21, with the reduction starting in late 2020 and into the 1st quarter of 2021.