

# Older Adults Served by California's Homelessness Programs



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## Acknowledgements

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This research brief is part of a series using the Homeless Data Integration System to understand how homelessness programs are reaching different populations in California. Other briefs in the series focus on unaccompanied children and young adults, families with children, and veterans.

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## Abstract

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This brief provides a snapshot of the approximately 148,000 older adults (ages 50 and older) who were served by homelessness programs in California that reported data to the Homeless Data Integration System between July 1, 2018, and June 30, 2021. About 26 percent of all people served by homelessness programs were older adults. This brief focuses on the approximately 141,000 older adults who were served as individuals (in households without children). Two-thirds of those older adult individuals identified as male, and Black people were overrepresented (29 percent vs. 6 percent in the state's total population). About 40 percent of those older adult individuals met the criteria for chronic patterns of homelessness: at least one cumulative year of homelessness in the previous three years plus a disabling condition. Reflecting this need, about 21 percent of older adult individuals served during the assessment period had enrolled in a permanent supportive housing program, which pairs deeply subsidized housing with health and social services. Several state programs and initiatives are working to meet the particular health and social service needs for the older adult population.

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## Introduction

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Older adults make up a growing share of the U.S. population experiencing homelessness.<sup>1</sup> Older adults disproportionately experience homelessness, including among populations that already have disparate rates of homelessness (e.g., Black, Indigenous, and Pacific Islander people, gender and sexual minorities).<sup>2</sup> One study in San Francisco found that in 1990, roughly 11 percent of adult individuals experiencing homelessness were age 50 and older; by 2019, that share likely increased to nearly 50 percent.<sup>3,4</sup> In data reported through Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS) in California, 19 percent of people served by homelessness service providers in 2022 were adults ages 55 and older, up from 16 percent in 2017.<sup>5</sup> Homelessness among adults ages 65 and older is projected to increase for the next decade.<sup>6</sup>

In studies in New York and California, almost half of adults ages 50 and older who were experiencing homelessness first entered homelessness after the age of 50. These adults were more likely to have been married and maintained full-time employment before entering homelessness compared to those who entered homelessness before the age of 50. Older adults' experiences of homelessness are more commonly precipitated by discrete traumatic events (typically marital breakup, their own or their spouse's job loss or illness, or the death of their spouse or parent) than are younger adults', for whom homelessness is more often precipitated by a confluence of factors.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Culhane, D., et al. (2013). "The Age Structure of Contemporary Homelessness: Evidence and Implications for Public Policy." *Analyses of Social Issues and Public Policy*, 13, no. 1: 228–244, <https://doi.org/10.1111/asap.12004>.

<sup>2</sup> de Sousa, T., et al. (2022). "The 2022 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress, Part 1: Point-in-Time Estimates of Homelessness." U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Retrieved from: <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/sites/default/files/pdf/2022-AHAR-Part-1.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> "Adult individuals" are adults ages 25 or older without children in the household.

<sup>4</sup> Hahn, J., et al. (2006) "Brief Report: The Aging of the Homeless Population: Fourteen-Year Trends in San Francisco." *Journal of General Internal Medicine*, 21, no. 7: 775–778, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1525-1497.2006.00493.x>; Kelly, M. (2019). "San Francisco's Aging Homeless Population: Here's What It's like Being a Senior on the Street." KRON4. Retrieved from: <https://www.kron4.com/news/san-franciscos-aging-homeless-population-heres-what-its-like-being-a-senior-on-the-street/>.

<sup>5</sup> California Interagency Council on Homelessness. (n.d.). *Homeless Data Integration System*. <https://bcsh.ca.gov/calich/hdis.html>

<sup>6</sup> Culhane, D., et al. (2019). "The Emerging Crisis of Aged Homelessness: Could Housing Solutions Be Funded by Avoidance of Excess Shelter, Hospital, and Nursing Home Costs?" *International Journal of Population Data Science*, 4, no. 3, <https://doi.org/10.23889/ijpds.v4i3.1185>.

<sup>7</sup> Brown, R., et al. (2016). "Pathways to Homelessness among Older Homeless Adults: Results from the HOPE HOME Study." *PLoS ONE*, 11, no. 5: e0155065. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0155065>; Shinn, M., et al. (2007). "Predictors of Homelessness among Older Adults in New York City: Disability, Economic, Human and Social Capital and Stressful Events." *Journal of Health Psychology*, 12, no. 5: 696–708, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1359105307080581>; Crane, M., et al. (2005). "The Causes of Homelessness in Later Life: Findings From a 3-Nation Study." *The Journals of Gerontology: Series B*, 60, no. 3: S152–S159, <https://doi.org/10.1093/geronb/60.3.S152>.



This brief defines people experiencing homelessness at age 50 and older as **older adults**, consistent with a recent statewide assessment of homelessness programs.<sup>8</sup> In studies across the United States, these older adults experiencing homelessness had a prevalence of geriatric conditions—for example, falls, functional impairments (e.g., difficulty with bathing, toileting, dressing), cognitive impairments (e.g., difficulty remembering, following directions), and sensory impairments (e.g., hearing and vision loss)—similar to adults in the general population who are 20–30 years older.<sup>9</sup> Older adults experiencing homelessness had a prevalence of substance use that is lower than younger adults experiencing homelessness, but higher than the general population of similar ages.<sup>10</sup> These studies found high rates of poor physical and mental health and premature mortality (death), in part due to the impact of homelessness.<sup>11,12</sup> These older adults have high rates of morbidity (illness), utilization of acute health care, avoidable institutional care, and mortality.<sup>13</sup>

Because older adults experiencing homelessness have a high prevalence of chronic medical conditions, they often require ongoing medical care as well as substance use and mental health care.<sup>14</sup> They also can require transportation and communication help (e.g., access to phones). Due to cognitive and sensory impairments, older adults can require additional assistance to access social services, such as help with filling out applications, making appointments, and navigating complex bureaucratic processes. Older adults' mobility impairments require accessible shelter and housing options, and older adults more commonly need assistance with activities of daily living. Older adults who are managing chronic health conditions require safe and secure places to store their medications and access to healthy foods.

Older adults without a fixed residence often find it difficult to establish eligibility for and access to the benefits and services that are intended to help older adults live in their own homes. For example, California's In-Home Support Services (IHSS) program (an optional Medicaid benefit) and some Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS)

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<sup>8</sup> California Interagency Council on Homelessness. (2023). "Statewide Homelessness Assessment (July 1, 2018-June 30, 2021): Report to the Legislature." Retrieved from: [https://bcsh.ca.gov/calich/documents/homelessness\\_assessment.pdf](https://bcsh.ca.gov/calich/documents/homelessness_assessment.pdf).

<sup>9</sup> Brown, R., et al. (2017). "Geriatric Conditions in a Population-Based Sample of Older Homeless Adults." *The Gerontologist*, 57, no. 4: 757–766, <https://doi.org/10.1093/geront/gnw011>; Cohen, C. (1999). "Aging and Homelessness." *The Gerontologist*, 39, no. 1: 5–15, <https://doi.org/10.1093/geront/39.1.5>.

<sup>10</sup> Kaplan, L., et al. (2019). "Unmet Mental Health and Substance Use Treatment Needs among Older Homeless Adults: Results from the HOPE HOME Study." *Journal of Community Psychology*, 47, no. 8: 1893–1908, <https://doi.org/10.1002/jcop.22233>.

<sup>11</sup> Brown, R., et al. (2022). "Factors Associated with Mortality Among Homeless Older Adults in California: The HOPE HOME Study." *JAMA Internal Medicine*, 182, no. 10: 1052–1060, <https://doi.org/10.1001/jamainternmed.2022.3697>.

<sup>12</sup> Fazel, F., Geddes, J., & Kushel, M. (2014). "The Health of Homeless People in High-Income Countries: Descriptive Epidemiology, Health Consequences, and Clinical and Policy Recommendations." *The Lancet*, 384, no. 9953: 1529–1540, [https://doi.org/10.1016%2FS0140-6736\(14\)61132-6](https://doi.org/10.1016%2FS0140-6736(14)61132-6); Kaplan, et al. (2019).

<sup>13</sup> Caton, C., et al. (2005). "Risk Factors for Long-Term Homelessness: Findings from a Longitudinal Study of First-Time Homeless Single Adults." *American Journal of Public Health*, 95, no. 10:1753–1759, <https://doi.org/10.2105/ajph.2005.063321>.

<sup>14</sup> Kaplan, et al. (2019); Brown, et al.(2017); Fazel, Geddes, & Kushel. (2014).

waiver programs aim to keep older adults and those with disabilities living in the community, but eligibility to enroll in those programs generally refers to people who are “living in their own homes.”<sup>15</sup> Homelessness service programs can lack the infrastructure, training, and personnel to meet the needs of older adults with functional and cognitive impairments. Under California’s licensing laws, housing providers often cannot provide “care and supervision” in unlicensed settings; in some instances, they can face legal sanctions if they house residents who have “unmet needs for care and supervision.”<sup>16</sup>

Recognizing the severe consequences of late-life homelessness, several state agencies and departments, along with the California Interagency Council on Homelessness (Cal ICH), are coordinating services for California’s aging population experiencing homelessness and prevention efforts for older adults at risk of homelessness. The State’s Master Plan for Aging (MPA), released by the California Department of Aging (CDA) in 2021, aims to end homelessness among older adults. The plan calls for more affordable housing options, including production, preservation, and protection of affordable housing for older adults. The MPA also supports specific programs such as the California Department of Social Services’ (CDSS) Home Safe program. Home Safe provides a diverse portfolio of services to clients in Adult Protective Services who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness, including family reunification, mobility-related home modifications, and coverage of higher-than-expected utility costs.

Other initiatives by CDA and CDSS focus on longer-term supports for older adults experiencing homelessness, preserving and expanding residential care for older adults with disabilities, funding to preserve and expand senior care facilities, supporting older adults experiencing elder abuse, equity and justice in aging, and mapping more accessible and affordable housing options for older adults.<sup>17</sup> To further these efforts, there is a need for stronger systems of coordination that address older adults’ complex conditions and increase their access to supportive services.

This brief highlights data for older adults served by homelessness programs in California using information reported to the Homeless Data Integration System (HDIS) during the **three-year assessment period between July 1, 2018, and June 30, 2021**. The brief describes the older adults served by programs in these three years, their characteristics, the kinds of assistance they received, and their housing outcomes by the end of this period.

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<sup>15</sup> California Department of Social Services. (2019). “Manual of Policies and Procedures: Social Service Standards.” Retrieved from: <https://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/letters-regulations/legislation-and-regulations/adult-services-regulations>.

<sup>16</sup> California Department of Social Services. (2019); Goldfarb & Lipman, LLP. (2010). “Between the Lines: A Question & Answer Guide on Legal Issues in Supportive Housing.” Corporation for Supportive Housing. Retrieved from: [https://www.csh.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/Tool\\_BTL\\_National1.pdf](https://www.csh.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/Tool_BTL_National1.pdf).

<sup>17</sup> These initiatives include CDSS’s Community Care Expansion Program, the CDA’s “Gap Analysis and Multi-Year Roadmap for Non-Medi-Cal Home and Community-Based Services,” and the California Health and Human Services Agency’s Elder and Disability Justice Coordinating Council.

### About the Data

HDIS provides the most comprehensive data available about who is served by homelessness programs across California, including stays in temporary housing programs, residence in permanent housing programs, interactions with street outreach teams, homelessness prevention assistance, and other kinds of services for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. Developed by Cal ICH in 2021, HDIS aggregates and processes data that local homelessness service, shelter, and housing providers report to HMIS (Homeless Management Information Systems) to understand how many people are served by these programs, their characteristics, and their outcomes. HDIS does not include information on all services provided across the state, as not all service providers enter data into HMIS, but the reach of the data continues to expand with time.

The information in this brief is based on people's ages and family statuses when they were first observed in HDIS during the assessment period (July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2021). **Adults** are people who were between ages 25 and 49, and **older adults** are people who were ages 50 and older. **Families** are people in households containing both children (under age 18) and adults (ages 18 and older), and **individuals** are people in households without dependent children.

This brief describes how older adult individuals are served by homelessness programs reporting to HDIS during the assessment period, including prevention and permanent housing programs for people who are not currently experiencing homelessness. The data show who engages with programs reporting to HDIS, but they don't speak to how many people might need the various services. These data were collected during the COVID-19 pandemic, which could have impacted reporting, service utilization, and outcomes, particularly as older adults were prioritized for non-congregate shelter through Project Roomkey.

## Characteristics of Older Adult Individuals Served by Homelessness Programs

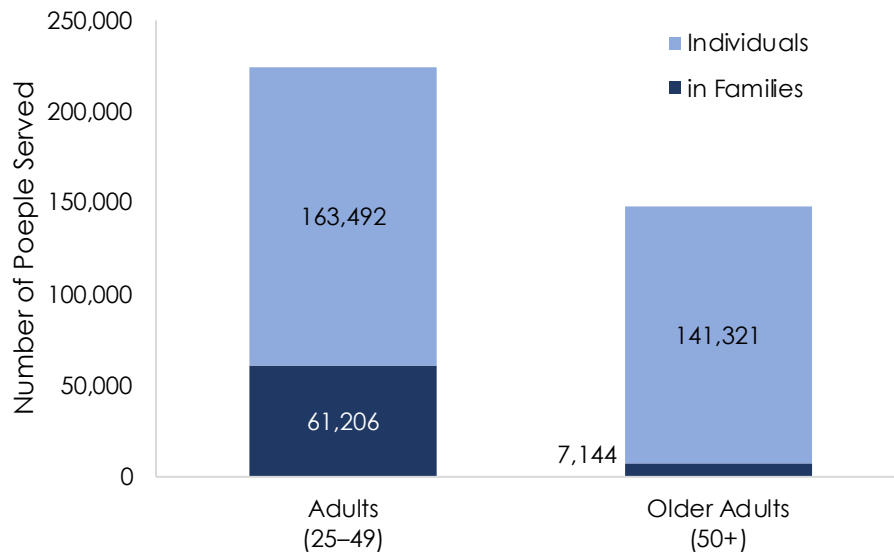
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Between July 1, 2018, and June 30, 2021, HDIS data recorded **more than 148,000 older adults served by local homelessness service, shelter, and housing programs in California**, shown in Figure 1. Older adults represent 26 percent of all people recorded in HDIS data, including both individuals and people in families. Older adults (ages 50+) were more likely than adults (ages 25–49) to be served as “individuals,” meaning they were not in households with children younger than age 18. Among adult individuals who were at least age 25, 46 percent were older adults, highlighting the importance of programs that target the needs of older adult individuals experiencing or at risk of homelessness.



## CHARACTERISTICS OF OLDER ADULT INDIVIDUALS SERVED BY HOMELESSNESS PROGRAMS

**Figure 1. The number of adults (ages 25–49) and older adults (ages 50+) served by programs recorded in HDIS between July 1, 2018, and June 30, 2021**



The figures below present data on the 141,321 older adult individuals served by homelessness programs during the assessment period, with comparisons to the 163,492 adult individuals. The brief focuses on individuals because the vast majority of older adults were served as individuals, and people in families experience homelessness quite differently and have access to different programs designed to support families. Reflecting the high rates of mortality among older adults experiencing homelessness found in prior research, most older adult individuals in HDIS (59 percent) were ages 50–59, 33 percent were ages 60–69, and only 9 percent were at least age 70.<sup>18</sup>

**Most older adult individuals (67 percent) identified as male**, similar to the gender composition of adult individuals (ages 25–49) in HDIS (Figure 2) and to the percentages reported in the 2022 Point-in-Time Count of homelessness.<sup>19</sup> A higher share of older adult individuals identified as White non-Hispanic/non-Latinx and a lower share identified as White Hispanic/Latinx than did adult individuals. Similar shares identified as Black, African American, or African.

<sup>18</sup> Brown, et al. (2022).

<sup>19</sup> de Sousa, et al. (2022).

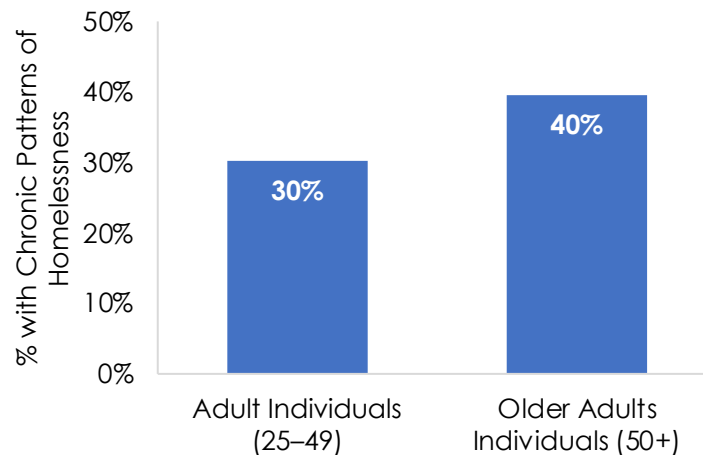
## CHARACTERISTICS OF OLDER ADULT INDIVIDUALS SERVED BY HOMELESSNESS PROGRAMS

**Figure 2. Gender and race/ethnicity of adult individuals (ages 25–49) and older adult individuals (ages 50+) served by programs recorded in HDIS between July 1, 2018, and June 30, 2021**

	Adult Individuals (ages 25–49)	Older Adult Individuals (ages 50+)
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	63%	67%
Female	36%	33%
Transgender or Questioning/Non-Conforming	1%	<1%
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>		
White non-Hispanic/non-Latinx	35%	43%
Black, African American, or African	28%	29%
White Hispanic/Latinx	27%	18%
American Indian, Alaska Native, or Indigenous	3%	3%
Multiple Races	4%	3%
Asian or Asian American	2%	3%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	1%	1%

**During the assessment period, 40 percent of older adult individuals met the criteria for chronic homelessness at some point** versus 30 percent of adult individuals, shown in Figure 3. Chronic homelessness is defined as experiencing homelessness for at least one year over the course of the previous three years while living with a serious mental illness, substance use issue, or other disabling condition. Older adult individuals are more likely to have a physical health disability than are younger adults, which contributes to meeting the criteria for chronic homelessness more often.<sup>20</sup>

**Figure 3. Percentages of adult individuals (ages 25–49) and older adult individuals (ages 50+) with chronic patterns of homelessness recorded in HDIS between July 1, 2018, and June 30, 2021**



<sup>20</sup> Caton, et al. (2005).

## Types of Homelessness Programs Serving Older Adult Individuals

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Over the assessment period, HDIS recorded approximately 331,000 program enrollments for the 141,321 older adult individuals served by homelessness programs. “Enrollments” refer to shelter stays, periods of contact with outreach teams, rental assistance provided by housing programs, residence in permanent supportive housing, and other services for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. To understand the types of programs serving older adult individuals, the brief presents the percentages of people who ever enrolled in programs reporting to HDIS between July 1, 2018, and June 30, 2021.

Older adult individuals (ages 50+) and adult individuals (ages 25–49) were served by similar types of programs, with some notable exceptions (Figure 4). The share of older adults served by street outreach programs was smaller than the share of adults, 31 percent vs. 37 percent. In contrast, **a larger share of older adult individuals was served by housing programs, including permanent supportive housing and rapid rehousing.** Specifically, 21 percent of older adult individuals were enrolled in permanent supportive housing programs versus 13 percent of adult individuals (ages 25–49). Permanent supportive housing programs are designed for people experiencing chronic patterns of homelessness or living with disabilities or other health conditions, which older adult individuals experience at relatively high rates. Many Continuums of Care (CoCs) also use older age as a prioritization factor for housing interventions.<sup>21</sup>

Older adult individuals' enrollments in homelessness programs were generally similar by race/ethnicity (Additional Figure A1) and gender (Additional Figure A2), with some slight differences. In particular, a higher share of Asian or Asian American older adult individuals in HDIS (19 percent) was served by homeless prevention programs than any other race/ethnicity.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (n.d.). “Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH).” HUD Exchange. Retrieved from: <https://www.hudexchange.info/homelessness-assistance/coc-esg-virtual-binders/coc-program-components/permanent-housing/permanent-supportive-housing/>; Caton, et al. (2005).

<sup>22</sup> Among all people recorded in HDIS, not just older adult individuals, a higher share of Asian or Asian Americans (17 percent) were served by prevention programs compared to any other race/ethnicity (5–10 percent).

## TYPES OF HOMELESSNESS PROGRAMS SERVING OLDER ADULT INDIVIDUALS

**Figure 4. Percentages of adult individuals (ages 25–49) and older adult individuals (ages 50+) in HDIS who ever enrolled in each type of program between July 1, 2018, and June 30, 2021**

	Adult Individuals (ages 25–49)	Older Adult Individuals (ages 50+)
<b>Services</b>		
Street Outreach	37%	31%
Homelessness Prevention	7%	8%
<b>Shelter</b>		
Emergency Shelter	48%	49%
Transitional Housing	7%	6%
<b>Housing</b>		
Permanent Supportive Housing <sup>a</sup>	13%	21%
Rapid Re-Housing	14%	18%
Other <sup>b</sup>	7%	8%

Notes: Numbers add to more than 100 percent because people can enroll in multiple program types.

<sup>a</sup> The “permanent supportive housing” category includes a small percentage of enrollments in “housing with services.”

<sup>b</sup> The “other” category includes enrollments in day shelters, housing without services, Safe Haven shelters for adults with serious mental illness, “services only,” “other” program types, and coordinated entry.

### Chronic Homelessness in Context

Chronic homelessness is defined as homelessness for at least one cumulative year over the span of three years while living with a serious mental illness, substance use issue, or other disabling condition. **Older adults experienced chronic patterns of homelessness more often than do people of other ages**—40 percent of older adult individuals (ages 50+) had chronic patterns of homelessness, compared to 30 percent of adult individuals (ages 25–49) over the assessment period.

Adults who first experience homelessness at an older age are more likely to experience longer durations of homelessness than are adults who first experience homelessness at a younger age.<sup>23</sup> Additionally, chronic homelessness among older adults increases risks for avoidable morbidity and mortality; it also presents unique barriers to adequately addressing their needs.<sup>24</sup>

Some CoC programs prioritize those with disabilities and of older age in providing services, including prioritizing individuals with chronic patterns of homelessness for permanent supportive housing. However, the data show that **among the nearly 56,000 older adult individuals with chronic patterns of homelessness in HDIS, only 25 percent lived in a permanent supportive housing program** during the assessment period. More older adult individuals might have moved into permanent supportive housing than this percentage reflects, because not all permanent supportive housing programs are included in HDIS. However, the data suggest a large need for more permanent supportive housing for this population.

<sup>23</sup> Caton, et al. (2005).

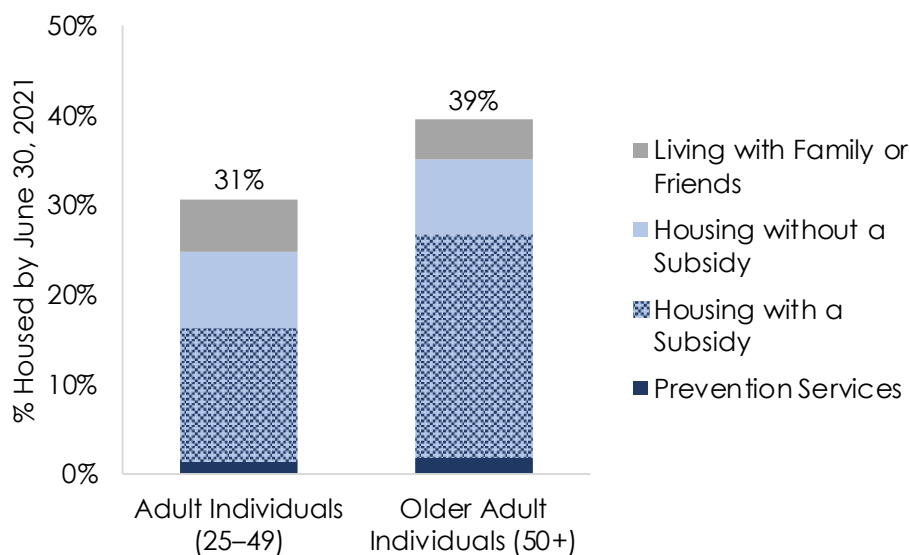
<sup>24</sup> Brown, et al. (2022).

## Outcomes for Older Adult Individuals Served by Homelessness Programs

Outcomes at the end of the assessment period, June 30, 2021, are measured with the type of program people were being served by or, if they were no longer being served by any programs in HDIS, with their last known housing situation reported by program staff. These data represent a snapshot of the available information on that date. Program staff record participants' housing situations when they end their participation in the program, and changes to housing situations between someone's last program exit and the end of the assessment period would not be reflected in the data.<sup>25</sup>

**Overall, 39 percent of all older adult individuals were recorded as being housed by the end of the assessment period**, shown in Figure 5. This percentage includes those living in subsidized housing, receiving homelessness prevention services, or moving into their own housing or with family or friends. For comparison, 31 percent of adult individuals were recorded as housed by the end of the assessment period.

**Figure 5. Percentages of adult individuals (ages 25–49) and older adult individuals (ages 50+) in HDIS who were recorded as being housed by the end of the assessment period, June 30, 2021**



Note: "Housing with a subsidy" includes people still enrolled and living in housing programs as recorded in HDIS and people who exited programs as recorded in HDIS and were recorded as moving into housing with a subsidy. More detailed outcome data are presented in Additional Figure A3.

<sup>25</sup> This snapshot of outcomes also does not measure the effectiveness of different types of programs. Many of the people still enrolled in programs at the end of the assessment period had only recently started receiving services and might have secured housing through those programs after the end of the assessment period.



**About 25 percent of older adult individuals were housed with a subsidy**, including 18 percent who were living in a housing program reporting to HDIS. For comparison, about 15 percent of adult individuals (ages 25–49) were housed with a subsidy (see Additional Figure A3).

Program staff were not able to record outcomes for 25 percent of older adult individuals and 36 percent of adult individuals (ages 25–49). These outcomes can be unknown for many reasons—program participants might have found housing and no longer needed assistance from program staff, left a shelter or stopped having contact with an outreach team while continuing to experience homelessness, or died. Unknown destinations were more common among people exiting street outreach and interim housing programs, and among individuals with chronic patterns of homelessness, suggesting many unknown destinations could reflect ongoing homelessness.

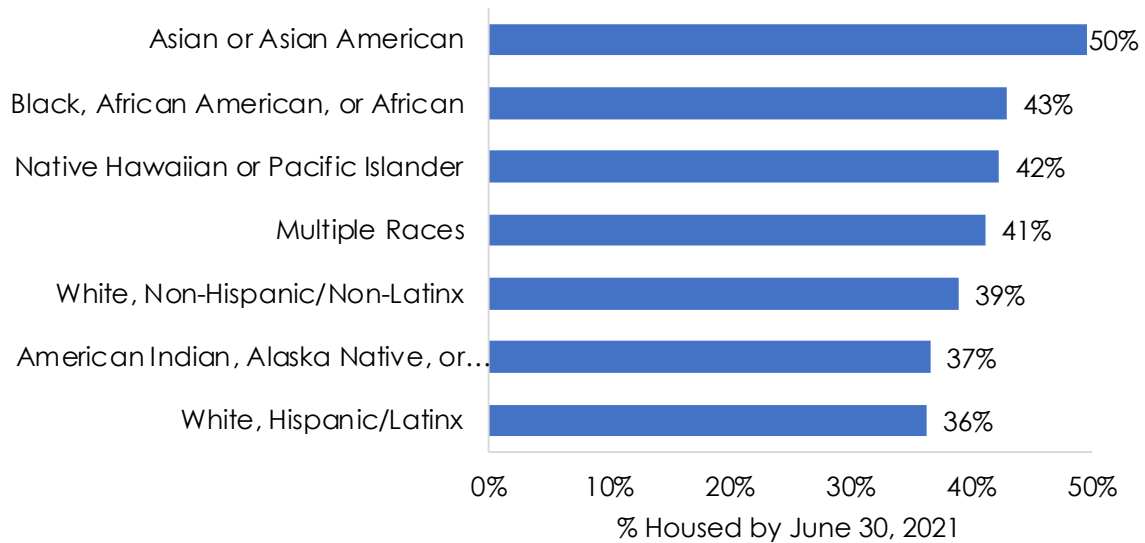
Outcomes for older adult individuals also differed by race/ethnicity and gender, as they do for people of younger ages.<sup>26</sup> As shown in Figure 6, Asian or Asian American older adult individuals were housed at the highest rate at the end of the assessment period (50 percent), in part reflecting their high rate of enrollments in homelessness prevention programs. About 9 percent of Asian or Asian American older adult individuals recorded in HDIS were still enrolled in prevention services on June 30, 2021 (see Additional Figure A4), and 19 percent were ever enrolled in prevention services over the assessment period (see Additional Figure A1). White non-Hispanic/non-Latinx; White Hispanic/Latinx; and American Indian, Alaska Native, or Indigenous older adult individuals were housed at the lowest rate at the end of the assessment period. Older adult individuals who identified as male were housed at a lower rate than those who identified as female or as transgender or questioning/non-singular, shown in Figure 7 (and Additional Figure A5).

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<sup>26</sup> For more detail on housing outcomes by race/ethnicity across all ages, see pg. 100 of Cal ICH's *Statewide Homelessness Assessment (July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2021): Report to the Legislature*, [https://bcsh.ca.gov/calich/documents/homelessness\\_assessment.pdf](https://bcsh.ca.gov/calich/documents/homelessness_assessment.pdf)

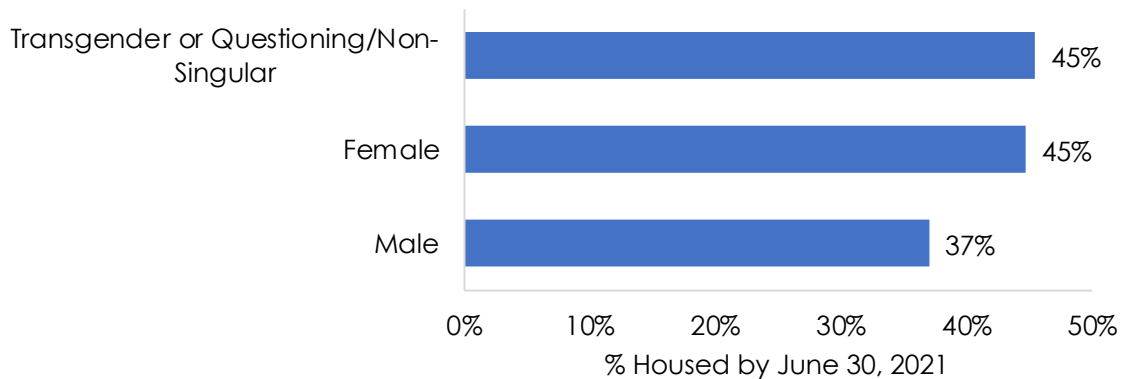
## OUTCOMES FOR OLDER ADULT INDIVIDUALS SERVED BY HOMELESSNESS PROGRAMS

**Figure 6. Percentages of older adult individuals (ages 50+) who were housed by the end of the assessment period, June 30, 2021, by race/ethnicity**



Notes: "Housed" includes people still enrolled in homelessness prevention programs, people still enrolled and moved into a housing program, and people who exited all programs and were recorded as moving into their own housing or with family or friends. More detailed outcome data are presented in Additional Figure A4.

**Figure 7. Percentages of older adult individuals (ages 50+) who were housed by the end of the assessment period, June 30, 2021, by gender**



Notes: "Housed" includes people still enrolled in homelessness prevention programs, people still enrolled and moved into a housing program, and people who exited all programs and were recorded as moving into their own housing or with family or friends. More detailed outcome data are presented in Additional Figure A5.

## Conclusion

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Older adults are a large and growing share of the population experiencing or at risk of homelessness, highlighting the importance of housing and services able to address their needs. Approximately 141,000 older adult individuals (ages 50 and older) were served by homelessness programs reporting to HDIS between July 1, 2018, and June 30, 2021. These older adult individuals met the criteria for chronic homelessness at higher rates than did adult individuals (ages 25–49). Reflecting the high service needs of older adults, a larger share of them participated in permanent supportive housing interventions than did adults ages 25–49, as these programs target those with chronic homelessness and give priority on criteria including extended length of homelessness, severity of disabilities, and older age.

The data presented in this brief provide a broad overview of the efforts to support older adult individuals experiencing, exiting, or at risk of homelessness. However, the data also show that there are still significant gaps in housing and services for older adult individuals experiencing homelessness and presenting high service needs.

Efforts to address these needs have been expanding across California in recent years. Cal ICH, other public agencies, and nonprofit organizations are increasingly coordinating these efforts to meet older adults' unique needs. HDIS provides a powerful resource for continuing to measure how these efforts reach the older adults they are designed to serve and how effectively they help prevent and end homelessness for this vulnerable age group.

## Additional Figures

**Figure A1. Percentages of older adult individuals (ages 50+) recorded in HDIS who ever enrolled in each type of program between July 1, 2018, and June 30, 2021, by race/ethnicity**

	White non-Hispanic/ non-Latinx	Black, African American, or African	White Hispanic/ Latinx	American Indian, Alaska Native, or Indigenous	Multiple Races	Asian or Asian American	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
<b>Services</b>							
Street Outreach	29%	32%	34%	31%	25%	20%	25%
Homelessness Prevention	6%	8%	8%	6%	7%	19%	7%
<b>Shelter</b>							
Emergency Shelter	50%	45%	51%	54%	54%	47%	51%
Transitional Housing	7%	7%	5%	6%	7%	4%	6%
<b>Housing</b>							
Permanent Supportive Housing <sup>a</sup>	22%	25%	17%	20%	24%	20%	21%
Rapid Re-Housing	19%	22%	15%	17%	21%	11%	20%
Other <sup>b</sup>	8%	7%	7%	9%	11%	7%	8%

Notes: Percentages for each group add to more than 100% because people can enroll in multiple types of programs.

<sup>a</sup> The "permanent supportive housing" category includes a small percentage of enrollments in "housing with services."

<sup>b</sup> The "other" category includes enrollments in day shelters, housing without services, Safe Haven shelters for adults with serious mental illness, "services only," "other" program types, and coordinated entry.

**Figure A2. Percentages of older adult individuals (ages 50+) recorded in HDIS who ever enrolled in each type of program between July 1, 2018, and June 30, 2021, by gender**

	Male	Female	Transgender or Questioning/ Non-Conforming
<b>Services</b>			
Street Outreach	31%	30%	28%
Homelessness Prevention	6%	12%	6%
<b>Shelter</b>			
Emergency Shelter	49%	48%	45%
Transitional Housing	8%	4%	7%
<b>Housing</b>			
Permanent Supportive Housing <sup>a</sup>	22%	20%	33%
Rapid Re-Housing	19%	17%	17%
Other <sup>b</sup>	7%	8%	15%

Notes: Percentages for each group add to more than 100% because people can enroll in multiple types of programs. "Individuals" are persons without children in the household.

<sup>a</sup>The "permanent supportive housing" category includes a small percentage of enrollments in "housing with services."

<sup>b</sup>The "other" category includes enrollments in day shelters, housing without services, Safe Haven shelters for adults with serious mental illness, "services only," "other" program types, and coordinated entry.

**Figure A3. Outcomes recorded in HDIS as of June 30, 2021, for adult individuals (ages 25–49) and older adult individuals (ages 50+) served during the assessment period, by age**

	Adults (ages 25–49)	Older Adults (ages 50+)
<b>Enrolled in Program Reporting Data to HDIS</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>36%</b>
Living in Housing Program (with a Temporary or Permanent Subsidy) *	11%	18%
Interim Housing (e.g., Emergency Shelter)	8%	10%
Enrolled in Housing Program (but not recorded as having moved into unit)	3%	4%
Enrolled in Prevention *	1%	2%
Enrolled in Other Services	2%	2%
<b>Exited Program Reporting Data to HDIS</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>64%</b>
Homelessness (sheltered or unsheltered)	15%	12%
Housing without a Subsidy *	8%	8%
Housing with a Subsidy *	4%	7%
Other Destinations	5%	7%
Living with Family or Friends *	6%	4%
Unknown	36%	25%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Note: "Other services" includes street outreach, coordinated entry, day shelters, "services only," and "other" or unknown program types.

\* Outcome indicates being housed at the end of the assessment period.



**Figure A4. Outcomes recorded in HDIS as of June 30, 2021, for older adult individuals (ages 50+) served during the assessment period, by race/ethnicity**

	White non-Hispanic/ non-Latinx	Black, African American, or African	White Hispanic/ Latinx	American Indian, Alaska Native, or Indigenous	Multiple Races	Asian or Asian American	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
<b>Enrolled in Program Reporting Data to HDIS</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>37%</b>
Living in a Housing Program (with a Temporary or Permanent Subsidy) *	18%	21%	14%	17%	20%	17%	19%
Interim Housing (e.g., Emergency Shelter)	10%	10%	10%	12%	11%	12%	11%
Enrolled in a Housing Program (but not recorded as having moved into unit)	4%	5%	3%	4%	4%	3%	4%
Enrolled in Homelessness Prevention *	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%	9%	2%
Enrolled in Other Services	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
<b>Exited Program Reporting Data to HDIS</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>63%</b>
Homelessness (sheltered or unsheltered)	14%	9%	13%	15%	12%	9%	10%
Housing without a Subsidy *	8%	8%	9%	7%	8%	13%	9%
Housing with a Subsidy *	7%	9%	5%	7%	8%	6%	8%
Living with Family or Friends *	4%	4%	5%	5%	4%	5%	5%
Other Destinations	8%	6%	6%	6%	7%	7%	7%
Unknown	23%	25%	29%	25%	23%	19%	23%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Note: "Other services" includes street outreach, coordinated entry, day shelters, "services only," and "other" or unknown program types.

\* Outcome indicates being housed at the end of the assessment period.

**Figure A5. Outcomes recorded in HDIS as of June 30, 2021, for older adult individuals (ages 50+) served during the assessment period, by gender**

	Female	Male	Transgender or Questioning/ Non-Conforming
<b>Enrolled in Program Reporting Data to HDIS</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>43%</b>
Living in a Housing Program (with a Temporary or Permanent Subsidy) *	18%	18%	26%
Interim Housing (e.g., Emergency Shelter)	10%	10%	9%
Enrolled in a Housing Program (but not recorded as having moved into unit)	4%	4%	5%
Enrolled in Homelessness Prevention *	3%	1%	1%
Enrolled in Other Services	2%	2%	2%
<b>Exited Program Reporting Data to HDIS</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>57%</b>
Homelessness (sheltered or unsheltered)	11%	13%	11%
Housing without a Subsidy *	11%	7%	5%
Housing with a Subsidy *	8%	7%	8%
Living with Family or Friends *	5%	4%	5%
Other Destinations	6%	7%	7%
Unknown	23%	27%	21%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Note: "Individuals" are persons without children in the household. "Other services" includes street outreach, coordinated entry, day shelters, "services only," and "other" or unknown program types.

\* Outcome indicates being housed at the end of the assessment period.