

**NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY
FACT SHEET**

Causes of Homelessness

Several issues arose about what is contributing to Seattle's homelessness including:

Housing affordability:

- The cost of housing was cited by 20% of respondents as causing their homelessness.
- More than 70% of respondents say that they could only afford a \$500 rent.
- It should also be noted that 41% of those living outdoors owned their own home or rented housing immediately preceding their experience of homelessness.

Foster Care System:

- Participants identified a lack of support as they transitioned from the foster care system to adulthood, as well as their previous experiences of abuse and instability in the foster care system as contributing to homelessness.
- 40% of respondents under the age of 25 years reported a history of foster care, and one-in-four youth experience homelessness within four years of leaving the foster care system.

Income loss:

- When people were asked about the primary event that led to their homelessness, 25% said losing their job.

Issues that Need addressing to Help People

Drug and Alcohol Abuse:

- 35% reported using hard drugs (meth, heroin, crack)
- 13% percent of respondents reported drug or alcohol abuse was the primary cause of their homelessness. 45% of survey respondents self-reported they did not use drugs,
- 29% reported using alcohol
- 13% of respondents reported they were accessing drug or alcohol counseling services

Mental Health Issues:

- Assistance with mental health issues and accessing healthcare overall were identified as great needs by homeless individuals.
- Depression (42.2%), Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (30.9%), and Bi-polar Disorder (23.6%) were cited as the top three health conditions affecting those who are homeless.

Service Care Needs:

- Participants had a lot to say about the current system of providers, programs, and service needs in Seattle.
- 88% of respondents had been in shelter at one time, but are now unsheltered.
- 52% have received outreach, but remain homeless.

###