Plan to Combat Homelessness

Adopted by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Tuolumne

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COUNTY OF TUOLUMNE PLAN TO COMBAT HOMELESSNESS

There is an increased awareness about homelessness in Tuolumne County. Concerned citizens, local organizations and government have come together in recent years to look for answers that will both assist individuals and families in our community who are experiencing homelessness, and ensure that neighborhoods and businesses are not negatively affected by the crisis. To end homelessness, a community-wide coordinated, cost-effective approach to delivering services, housing, and programs is needed.

The purpose of this plan is to identify goals, strategies and activities that are available in Tuolumne County or are planned activities to reduce homelessness and make it non-recurring.

BACKGROUND

On July 1, 2016, Governor Brown signed legislation enacting the No Place Like Home (NPLH) program. The purpose of the NPLH Program is to provide financing for the development of permanent supportive housing for individuals living with serious mental illness who are homeless, chronically homeless, or at-risk of chronic homelessness.

One of the threshold requirements counties must meet to access funding is to submit a County Homelessness Plan specifying existing resources and challenges as well as goals, strategies and activities both in process or to be initiated to reduce homelessness and make it nonrecurring. The County Plan must be developed through a collaborative process that includes community input and extensive stakeholder engagement.

THE MANY FACES OF HOMELESSNESS IN THE COUNTY

People become homeless for many reasons. With the high cost of housing, a single crisis such as a medical bill, missed paycheck, expensive car repair, loss of a job, or death of a family member can cause a household to lose their home. Many in our community face challenges as foster children, run-away youth, families fleeing domestic violence, or individuals dealing with mental illness, substance abuse, or exiting prison and working to put their life back together.

The full U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) definition of homelessness is contained in Appendix A and includes people who are homeless, people in shelters, and those at risk of homelessness. The HUD definition of homelessness does not include “couch surfers”, which is a term used to define people experiencing homelessness who are doubled up with friends or family and do not have a stable place to live. In rural areas such as Tuolumne County, service providers often encounter clients in need of emergency housing and services who fall into this category.

TUOLUMNE COUNTY DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Prior to developing final plans proposed to combat homelessness in Tuolumne County, it’s important to review data that will impact the plan.

Geography: Tuolumne County is in the central eastern section of California. It covers 2,221 square miles and ranges in elevation from about 300 feet in the Sierra Nevada foothills to almost

13,000 feet in the eastern regions. Federal, state, and local governments own approximately 77% of the land in Tuolumne County. The county includes the Northern portion of Yosemite National Park. The current estimated population based on the July 1, 2017 US Census Quick Facts is 54,248.

Population and Growth: Census data for this data analysis is dated July 1, 2017, and is taken from the US Census Quick Facts tables. The estimated total population for the county for 2017 is 54,248. The base used is from April 1, 2010, which was a total of 55,365. The total population has decreased by 2.0% from 2010 to 2017.

Ethnicity and Age: To get a better picture of Tuolumne County, a comparison of the County to California US Census Quick Facts is found in Appendix A, and summarized briefly.

It is also helpful to look at Tuolumne County's Ethnicity and Age data by comparing data from 2015 to 2017, also shown in Appendix B.

As found in the charts in Appendix B, the county continues to be one of the "grayer" counties of California, with a high number of persons 65 years and over (25.5%), with this number increasing by 1.3% since 2015. Comparing this same population component to California population data, the percentage of persons 65 and older is 11.6% higher in Tuolumne County than California.

Tuolumne County also continues to be predominantly of a single ethnicity with 90.5% of its population being white alone. Hispanics still represent the next largest group at 12.5%, an increase of .9% since 2015. Those who identify as two or more races are the third largest ethnicity group, yet it has seen little change (increased .1% since 2017). The fourth largest ethnic group at 2.3% is American Indian and Alaska Native alone, followed closely by Black or African American alone with no change since 2015. The smallest group of ethnicities are the Asian population at 1.3% which hasn't changed since 2015, and the Hawaiian or Pacific Islander population at 0.3%, which is a very slight increase of .1%.

The percentage of Veterans in the Tuolumne County population is 10.7%, but when compared to the same cohort in California, which is 23%, the average number of Veterans as a component of Tuolumne County's general population is considerably smaller. This is somewhat surprising, given the number in the population that are persons age 65 and over.

Tuolumne County Public Health and Adventist Health-Sonora teamed up to publish the 2017-2019 Tuolumne County Community Health Needs Assessment in 2017. The measurements presented in that assessment were intended to allow for a course to be set to improve the public's health. The 2017 publication built upon the assessment previously completed in 2013. Information from that report will be included in various sections of this document.

The purpose in including the county demographic information is to compare the general Tuolumne County population to the data collected in the PIT Summer 2017 survey, which shows that the demographics for Ethnicity and Age of homeless persons closely mirrors the Ethnicity demographics of the general Tuolumne County population.

- *The homeless in Tuolumne County are primarily white/Caucasian, followed by Hispanic/Latino, then Native/American Indian, Pacific Islander, American Indian/White, Black/African American, and other.*

- *The age distribution/demographic of homeless is also quite similar.*

The change in population numbers for counties with a population of <100,000 is shown in Appendix C, which indicates increases or decreases in the total population numbers for those counties. Utilizing the data in Appendix B, the total Tuolumne County population has seen little change from the period 2000 to 2018.

Information has also been extracted from the Tuolumne County Community Health Needs Assessment completed in 2017, which is shown in *Appendix D*. This chart shows that from the period 2010 to 2015, the county's population decreased from 55,185 to 53,709.

It should also be noted that the Tuolumne County Community Health Needs Assessment reported that there was a 2.8% population decrease in the last 15 years in contrast to neighboring counties as well as the state in general. The county population is also remaining older than the state, with 1.2% of the state being 65 years old compared to 22% of the county being that age. What is important to note is that *even with the decline in population, the PIT homeless counts each year during the same time frame have held steady or increased.*

Economy Data: Government is the major employer in Tuolumne County, followed by health and social assistance, and retail trade. In July 2016, the labor force included 22,270 residents, of which 20,820 were employed. (see *Appendix E*)

Income Data: 20.4% of the population has an income of between $50,000 and $74,999 annually. The Median household income in 2015 was $54,655. Half of the population has a household income of less than $50,000; the California median income (2010 to 2014) was $64,189.

Poverty Data: One of the causes of homelessness (see the section on Homeless Data) is the lack of affordable housing, which is also complicated by the fact that many in Tuolumne County live at or below the Federal Poverty Level (FPL).

	% 2015	% 2016	% Change
Persons living below Poverty Level	14.3%	15.4%	Increased 1.1%

The chart above includes census data from the time frames noted, showing the percentage of the population living below the poverty level in Tuolumne County.

The chart shown in *Appendix F* compares the poverty population below 200% of Federal Poverty Level (FPL) for counties with a population <100,000, using data from CY2013 and CY2018. (This data is taken from California DHCS, MHSUDS Information Notice No. 18-038, Enclosures 1, 2 and 3). There has been very little change in the poverty level for the county. Tuolumne County's poverty population is somewhat higher when compared to other small counties or counties with similar size.

The information shown in *Appendix G* is extracted from the Tuolumne County Community Health Needs Assessment 2017, and compares Tuolumne with Amador and Calaveras Counties, as well as comparing it with the state of California and National poverty levels. While Tuolumne County Poverty level is higher than Amador or Calaveras, it is lower when compared to California and the United States. *Unfortunately, the poverty rates for children in Tuolumne County are greater than that for seniors in Tuolumne County or the general population.*

In order to see how Tuolumne county's Poverty population compares with other small counties (with a population of less than 100,000), the chart in *Appendix H* has been prepared to demonstrate the burden carried by smaller counties where the poverty population below 200% of the federal poverty level means that there may be an even greater likelihood that homelessness

will increase. These individuals may not be able to find affordable housing in Tuolumne County, given that there is a lack of affordable housing in the county (see the data on "Affordable Housing in Tuolumne County").

Summary and Conclusions from Demographic Data, and Relationship to Homelessness in Tuolumne County:

Considering the contrast between national, state and county population trends, as well as being a rural area, designated as a "small county" in California, Tuolumne County faces unique challenges specific to our community, including responding to the needs of the homeless here:

1. The county's rural location means transportation challenges, leading to increased isolation for many residents, including the homeless who seek the few social services available in the county. Federal, State, and Local Governments own 77% of the land in the County.

2. The demographics for Ethnicity and Age of homeless persons closely mirrors the Ethnicity demographics of the general Tuolumne County population.
    a. The homeless in Tuolumne County are primarily white/Caucasian, followed by Hispanic/Latino, then Native/American Indian, Pacific Islander, American Indian/White, Black/African American, and other.
    b. The age distribution/demographic of homeless is also quite similar to that of the general population.

3. Half of the population of Tuolumne County has a household income of less than $50,000; the California median income (2010 to 2014) was $64,189.

4. The Tuolumne County Community Health Needs Assessment reported that there was a 2.8% population decrease in the last 15 years in contrast to neighboring counties as well as the state in general. However, even with the decline in population, the annual PIT homeless counts during the same time frame have held steady or increased.

5. One of the causes of homelessness is the lack of affordable housing, which is also complicated by the fact that the number of individuals in Tuolumne County living at or below the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) continues to increase each year.

6. Tuolumne County's poverty population is somewhat higher when compared to other counties of similar size.

7. Poverty rates for children in Tuolumne County are greater than those for seniors or the general county population. This aligns with national data which indicates a similar trend is being seen in other CoCs across the country.

8. When compared to national homeless counts, California has the highest numbers in the country, with greatest homeless populations in larger cities (San Francisco, Los Angeles, Sacramento). Given the cost of living in those areas, it's likely there will be a migration of homeless to less costly and more rural areas.

9. The county has a higher concentration of persons aged 65 and older, who make up more than 25% of the overall population. This demographic is of concern due to the increasing need for infrastructure to support them, which may impact the ability of both public and private or non-profit agencies to keep up with demand.

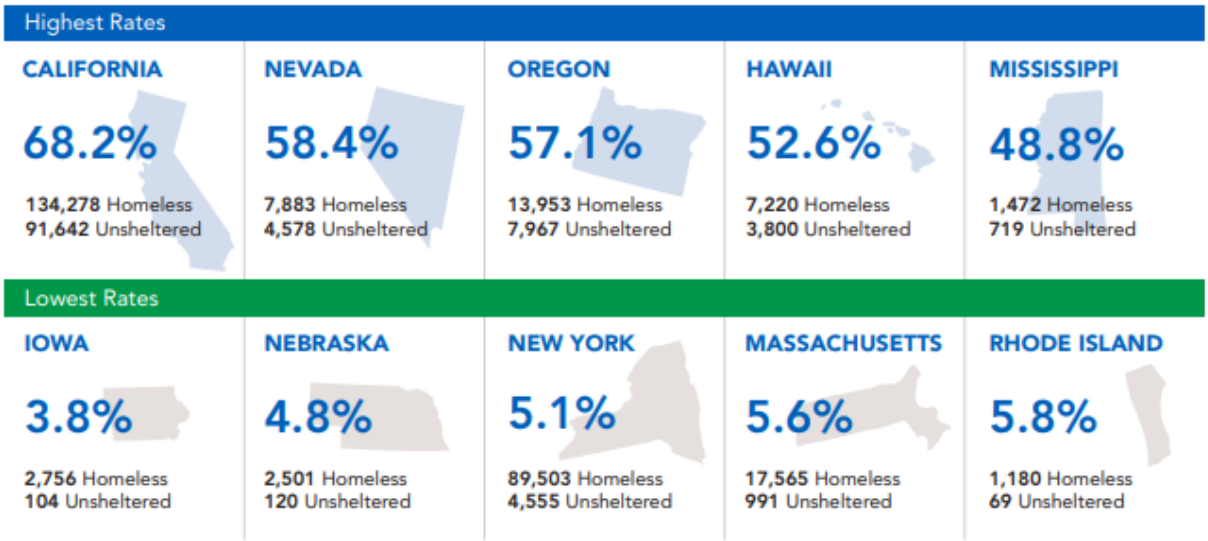
DATA ON HOMELESSNESS IN TUOLUMNE COUNTY

In this section, we will first compare Tuolumne County homelessness rates with those of California and those of the United States, as well as review the Point in Time Counts and data for the county.

From the 2017 AHAR Report (Homelessness Report to Congress)1, the key findings were that on a single night in 2017, 553,742 people were experiencing homelessness in the United States. For every 10,000 people in the country, 17 were experiencing homelessness. Approximately two thirds were staying in emergency shelters or a transitional housing program, and about one third were in unsheltered locations. Overall, homelessness increased for the first time in seven years. The number of people experiencing homelessness in families with children declined by five percent between 2016 and 2017. As of 2017, people in families with children represented 33 percent of the homeless population. It is important to note that the report showed that there was an increase in chronic homelessness, which included BOTH sheltered populations (an 8% increase) and unsheltered populations (14% increase). The following chart shows California leading the country with the highest rates of unsheltered people experiencing homelessness.

From the *Fact Sheet: Homelessness in California*, for 2017 it was reported that California had 115,738 homeless people, which accounted for 21% of the nation's homeless population. California also had the highest rate of unsheltered people at 64% (73,699 people). California had the second largest increase of homeless persons at 1,786 or 1.6%, behind New York with 7.660 more homeless people or 9.5%. More than one in five homeless people was located in either New York City (75,323 people or 14%) or Los Angeles (41,174 people or 7%). The five major city Continuums of Care with the highest rates of unsheltered homelessness were all located in California.

EXHIBIT 1.7: **States with the Highest and Lowest Rates of Unsheltered People Experiencing Homelessness**
2017



[1] The Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) is a HUD report to the U.S. Congress that provides nationwide estimates of homelessness, including information about the demographic characteristics of homeless persons, service use patterns, and the capacity to house homeless persons. The report is based on Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS) data about persons who experience homelessness during a 12-month period, point-in-time counts of people experiencing homelessness on one day in January, and data about the inventory of shelter and housing available in a community.

Chris Nichols from PolitiFact California, reported on March 27, 2018, that "As California's affordable housing crisis deepens, so does the state's related and often intractable problem: homelessness". PolitiFact2 did a fact check on how California's per capita and overall homeless population compared with other states. Using the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's T*he 2017 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress ("AHAR")*, PolitiFact stated: "The AHAR showed that California's homeless population jumped nearly 14 percent from 2016 to 2017 – to a total of more than 134,000 people. It rose nearly 9 percent over the previous seven years." According to PolitiFact, "that is much different than the national picture. While the national homeless population ticked up about 1 percent in 2017, it remained 13 percent lower than 2010." The article further states that "Notably, the rise statewide and nationally in 2017 was attributed to a surge in the number of people living on the streets in Los Angeles and other West Coast cities, at least in part due to a shortage of **affordable housing."**

POINT IN TIME COUNTS

Data on homelessness and poverty is important because it helps to identify who in our community is vulnerable and informs potential solutions to reduce homelessness.

To apply for federal and state funds for homeless housing and services, communities are required to conduct a census of people who are homeless on a single day during the last 10 days in January. Tuolumne County is a member of the Central Sierra Continuum of Care (COC) which is comprised of homeless advocates and service providers in the foothill counties of Amador, Calaveras, Tuolumne and Mariposa. The COC conducts the annual Point in Time (PIT) count with assistance from groups such as churches, food banks, shelters, social service agencies, law enforcement and various county social services and behavioral health staff. Annual counts are conducted by volunteers from the Central Sierra Continuum of Care which does not have any funding to pay for the cost of the PIT count. As a result, the extent of the effort is limited due to lack of funds. It is also difficult to collect accurate data on homelessness in a rural county where individuals are spread out in remote areas among rugged terrain. Given the lack of resources, and the challenge of accurately counting people who are experiencing homelessness, many believe that the number of people who are homeless is much higher than reported.

The annual PIT count includes people experiencing homelessness that are sheltered in places such as emergency shelters, transitional housing, and safe havens and every other year also measures people who are unsheltered and living in places such as cars, camps, and other open places. Beginning in 2019, HUD will require that PIT counts include sheltered and unsheltered homeless every year.

The PIT Count serves to demonstrate the number of beds and units available for homeless individuals through services such as emergency shelters, transitional housing, rapid re-housing programs such as temporary rental assistance and security deposit assistance, safe havens such as domestic violence shelters, and permanent supportive housing which is service-enriched housing for people who are homeless or in danger of becoming homeless who also have mental illness. The unsheltered count is intended to demonstrate the unmet need.

The results of the PIT Count are critical when applying for programs such as the new State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) No Place Like Home (NPLH) Program which will provide funding for permanent supportive housing, and the Veteran's Housing and Homelessness Prevention (VHHP) Program which provides funds for affordable rental housing, supportive and transitional housing for Veterans and their families who are experiencing

[2] PolitiFact is owned by the nonprofit Poynter Institute for Media Studies, established to seek to present the true facts, unaffected by agenda or biases.

homelessness. The HUD VASH Voucher Program, which provides rental assistance vouchers and services to homeless Veterans and their families, determines which communities will receive VASH Vouchers based largely on the number of Veterans identified in the local PIT Count. Statistics collected from the Central Sierra PIT Count also determine the amount of Emergency Shelter Grant Funds and other homeless services funds that are provided to each county through the local Continuum of Care.

JANUARY 2019 PIT SURVEY

The January 2019 PIT Count, conducted on the night of January 23, 2019, included homeless individuals and families that were both sheltered and unsheltered in the four foothill counties. There were 385 people experiencing homelessness in Tuolumne County based on the HUD definition of homelessness which excludes couch surfers. Among the four counties, there were 845 people who were homeless. The following chart shows the breakdown by County.

2019 Point In Time Count

County	Households	Total Persons*
Amador	149	214
Calaveras	126	186
Tuolumne	291	385
Mariposa	41	60
Total	607	845

Source: PIT Count results, April 29, 2019.
* Based on HUD definition which excludes couch surfers.

Results for Tuolumne County (see chart below) show that there were 255 households (301 individuals) who were unsheltered, 36 sheltered households (84 individuals) and 33 individuals who were couch surfing. As previously mentioned, HUD does not include couch surfers in the official PIT count.

There were **418 people in Tuolumne County experiencing homelessness** on January 23, 2019 based on the PIT count results. Given the difficulty of counting homeless individuals, the actual number is likely much higher.

2019 Total Point in Time Count - Sheltered and Unsheltered
Tuolumne County

Unsheltered		Sheltered		Total HUD Count	Couch Surfers	Total Homeless
Households	Individuals	Households	Individuals	Individuals	Individuals	
255	301	36	84	385	33	418

Source: PIT Count results, April 29, 2019.

The individuals who were sheltered were either in a homeless shelter or had a motel voucher (as a form of emergency housing). **Most of the 301 unsheltered individuals were living outside or in their vehicles.** The breakdown of locations is shown in the following chart.

Unsheltered Locations in Tuolumne County

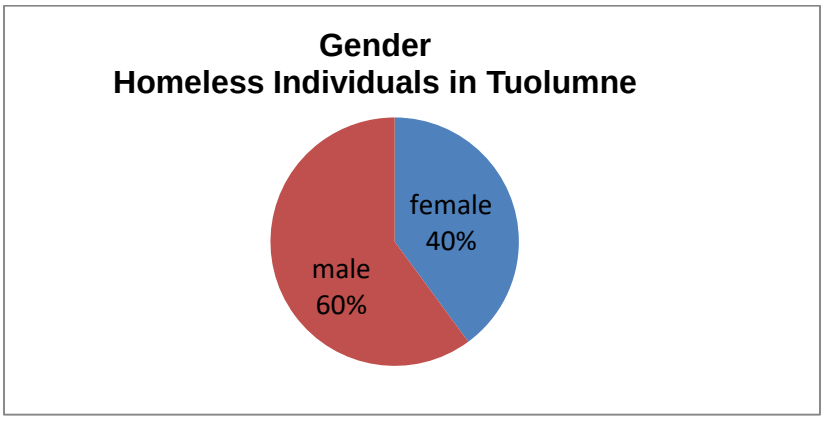
Location	Individuals
Abandoned Building	16

Encampment/Outside	209
Vehicle	73
Other	3
Total	301

Source: PIT Count results, April 29, 2019.

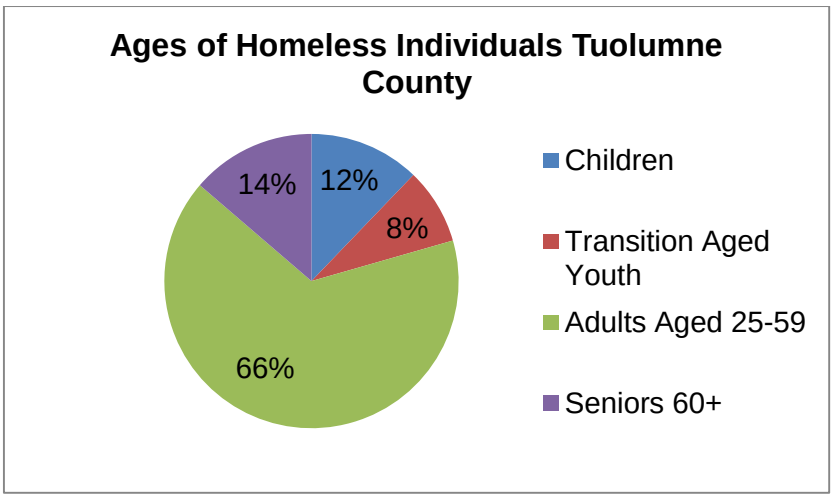
Gender, Age and Ethnicity

Of those that answered the question regarding gender, 40% were female and 60% male.

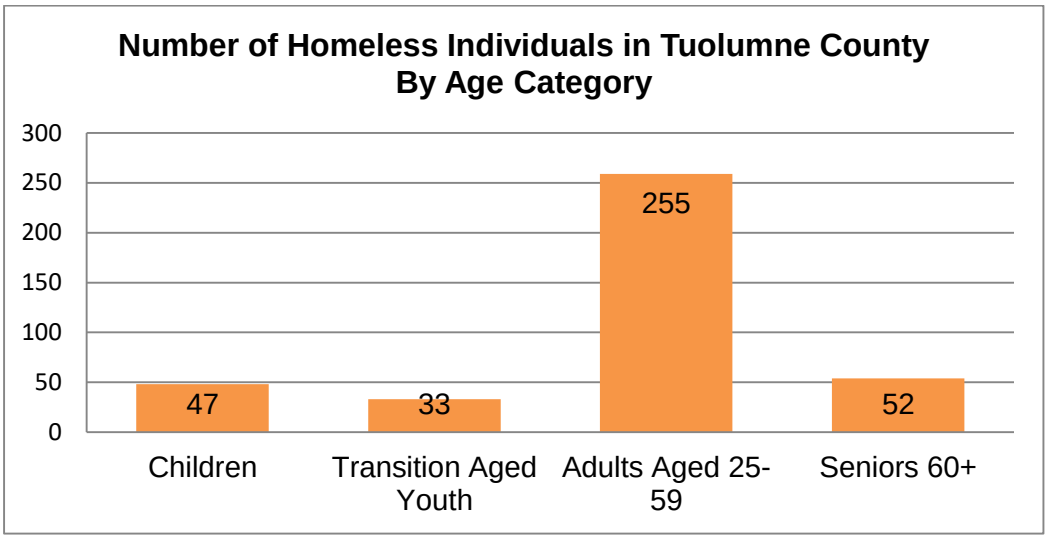


Source: PIT Count results, April 29, 2019.

The majority of people experiencing homelessness were in the 25-59 age category. The following two charts provide a breakdown showing homelessness among children under the age of 18, young adults between the ages of 18-24 (transition aged youth), adults age 25-59, and seniors.



Source: PIT Count results, April 29, 2019.



Source: PIT Count results, April 29, 2019. Note: There were 387 responses to the question on age.

Race and ethnicity statistics are provided in the chart below. They show that the race and ethnicity breakdown among those that are experiencing homelessness is similar to the race and ethnicity breakdown countywide.

Ethnicity	Homeless Individuals	County-wide
Not Latino	91%	88%
Latino	9%	12%
Race		
White	81%	81%
African American	1%	2%
Asian	0%	1%
American Indian	3%	2%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Island.	0%	1%
Multi Race	5%	3%
Race Unknown	9%	0%

Source: PIT Count results, April 29, 2019.

Veterans

There were 31 individuals in the PIT Count who identified themselves as Veterans. This represents 7% of the total homeless population. Three were sheltered and the other 28 were unsheltered. The breakdown of locations where unsheltered Veterans were living on January 23, 2018 is shown in the following chart.

Homeless Veterans Unsheltered Locations in Tuolumne County

Location	Individuals
Abandoned Building	3
Encampment/Outside	16
Vehicle	9
Total	28

Source: PIT Count results, April 29, 2019.

Chronic Homelessness

The HUD definition of chronic homelessness is complex and is intended to give direction to service providers as to who qualifies for programs funded to reduce chronic homelessness.

HUD defines chronic homelessness as follows:
A "chronically homeless" individual is defined to mean a homeless individual with a disability who lives either in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter, or in an institutional care facility if the individual has been living in the facility for fewer than 90 days and had been living in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter immediately before entering the institutional care facility.

In order to meet the "chronically homeless" definition, the individual also must have been living as described above continuously for at least 12 months, or on at least four separate occasions in the last 3 years, where the combined occasions total a length of time of at least 12 months. Each period separating the occasions must include at least 7 nights of living in a situation other than a place not meant for human habitation, in an emergency shelter, or in a safe haven.
Chronically homeless families are families with adult heads of household who meet the definition of a chronically homeless individual. If there is no adult in the family, the family would still be considered chronically homeless if a minor head of household meets all the criteria of a chronically homeless individual. A chronically homeless family includes those whose composition has fluctuated while the head of household has been homeless.[3]

The PIT Count simplified the chronic homeless definition by asking individuals how many times in the last three years they have been in a shelter or unsheltered (camping/on the streets/etc.). If they answered four or more times, they were reported as being chronically homeless.

In Tuolumne County, 140 (33.5%) of the individuals identified in the PIT Count were considered chronically homeless. A total of 15 were sheltered in an emergency shelter, motel or "other" location. The remainder, were in unsheltered locations as identified in the following chart.

Chronically Homeless Unsheltered Locations in Tuolumne County

Location	Individuals
Abandoned Building	9
Encampment/Outside	85
Vehicle	31
Total	125

Source: PIT Count results, April 29, 2019.

Domestic Violence

A total of 19 individuals indicated that they were homeless because they are fleeing domestic violence. Of these, 13 were in shelters, motels, or "other" location and 6 were unsheltered (Source: PIT Count results, April 29, 2019).

[3] Federal Register/Vol. 80, NO. 233/75791/Friday, December 4, 2015/Rules and Regulations/24 CFR Parts 91 and 578.

Disability

The PIT Count collected information from interviewees as to whether or not they have a mental or physical disability. There were a total of 188 responses indicating some type of disability. However a single respondent could have identified multiple disabilities. As a result, the data does not provide accurate information on the number of respondents with a disability. However, it does provide some indication as to the types of disabilities. A total of 11% of respondents indicated that they have a substance abuse disorder, 17% indicated that they have a mental illness, 1 indicated that he/she has HIV/AIDS, and 73 said that they have another type of disability.

PIT Survey Responses
People Reporting a Disability

Disability	Responses	% of Total Surveyed
Substance Use Disorder	43	10%
Mental Illness	68	16%
HIV AIDS	0	0%
Other Disability	72	17%
Total	183	44%

Source: PIT Count results, April 29, 2019.

Unaccompanied Youth

Two survey respondents indicated that they are unaccompanied youth under the age of 25 and both indicated that they are living in an abandoned building.

JANUARY 2018 PIT COUNT

The 2018 PIT Count conducted by the Central Sierra COC for the foothill counties only counted sheltered homeless individuals and families. Findings from the Central Sierra COC are reported for each county, including the incorporated cities within the county, and for the entire four-county COC service area.

The 2018 PIT Count (sheltered homeless) was conducted by volunteers on January 24, 2018 in the Central Sierra Service area of Amador, Calaveras, Tuolumne, and Mariposa counties. A total of 143 individuals (73 households) were counted in the 2018 sheltered count, of which 42 individuals (28 households) were from Tuolumne County.

2018 Total Point in Time Count - Sheltered

County	Households	Individuals
Amador	22	48
Calaveras	6	13
Tuolumne	28	42
Mariposa	17	31
Total	73	134

JANUARY 2017 PIT COUNT

The January 2017 PIT Count, conducted for the night of January 25, 2017, included homeless individuals and families that were both sheltered and unsheltered in the four foothill counties.

The 2017 sheltered and unsheltered count revealed that there were 366 homeless individuals (256 households) that were homeless in the four counties using the HUD definition of

homelessness and an additional 71 individuals that were identified as couch surfers. The couch surfers were homeless, but are not counted as homeless in the official HUD PIT count statistics because these individuals are not recognized by HUD as part of the homeless population.

In Tuolumne County, less than 200 unsheltered (homeless) individuals were found. There were 53 individuals (28 households) in shelters and 160 individuals (107 households) that were unsheltered in the 2017 PIT Count. The total HUD PIT Count for Tuolumne County in 2017 was 160 individuals. There were an additional 29 couch surfers that were not included in the HUD PIT Count. Many believe that the actual number of homeless individuals is many times higher than reported due to the difficulty of counting homelessness, especially in a rural area.

The following chart summarizes the findings from the January 2017 PIT survey:

2017 Total Point in Time Count - Sheltered and Unsheltered

	Sheltered		Unsheltered		Total HUD Count	Couch Surfers
County	Households	Individuals	Households	Individuals	Individuals	Individuals
Amador	22	34	70	115	149	5
Calaveras	3	6	11	13	19	20
Tuolumne	28	53	92	107	160	29
Mariposa	5	9	25	29	38	17
Total	58	102	198	264	366	71

SUMMER 2017 PIT COUNT

In addition to the official HUD PIT Count, the Amador Tuolumne Community Action Agency spearheaded an effort, funded by the Sonora Area Foundation, to count sheltered and unsheltered homeless individuals and families during the summer months. Many in our community notice an increase in homelessness in the summer months when the weather is more favorable. The “Summer Count”, conducted during the week of September 25, 2017, was an attempt to collect information to further define homelessness, collect more information on the causes of homelessness and determine whether or not there is an ebb and flow of homelessness during the year. The count also included couch surfers because they are part of our rural homeless population, even though they are not a recognized category of homelessness by HUD.

On the night of September 24, 2017, a total of 711 homeless residents were located during the count. It is noted that 177 of those were children under the age of 18. Other questions were also asked of participants in order to help paint a better picture of factors driving the problem in Tuolumne County. The following charts summarize the survey results.

Survey Results:

Total Adults (Age 25+)	465
Total Youth (Age 18-24)	45
Total Children (Under 18)	177
Total Interviewed	687
Total Observations	24*
Total Number of Respondents:	711

*Appeared to be homeless but declined to take survey.

Demographics by County:

From Tuolumne County: 375
From Other Counties: 231
Declined to Answer: 105

Age:

From Tuolumne AGES	NUMBER	Out of Tuolumne County – AGES	NUMBER
Ages 0 – 5	14	Ages 0 – 5	8
Ages 6 – 17	137	Ages 6 – 17	18
Ages 18 – 24	28	Ages 18 – 14	10
Ages 25 – 59	166	Ages 25 – 59	172
Ages 60 – 64	19	Ages 60 – 64	13
Ages 65+	11	Ages 65+	10

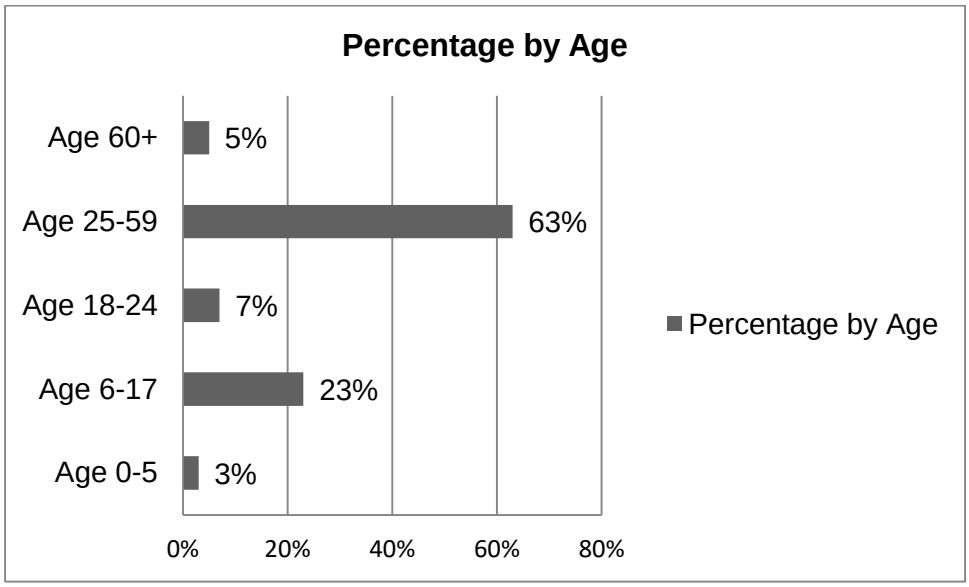
Gender by Age:

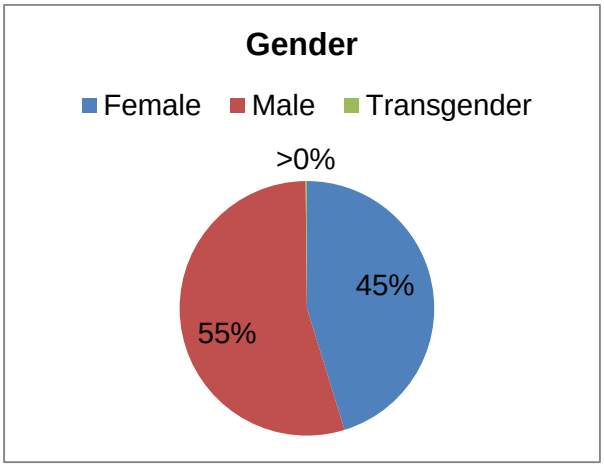
AGE	MALE	FEMALE	TRANSGENDER
Ages 0 – 5	10	12	0
Ages 6 – 17	87	63	0
Ages 18 – 24	16	20	1
Ages 25 – 59	184	151	0
Ages 60 – 64	22	10	0
Ages 65+	12	10	0

Ethnicity:

NUMBER	**ETHNICITY**
400	White
97	Hispanic/Latino
65	American Indian
8	Pacific Islander
6	American Indian/White
6	Black/African American
10	Other

REASONS FOR HOMELESSNESS	
120	Affordable Housing
68	Employment (No Job)
68	Income (Working, but low income)
33	Addiction
13	Disability
13	Choice
12	Mental Illness
10	Probation/Jail





Homelessness & Domestic Violence data was also collected during the 2017 PIT Summer Survey. A total of 128 Respondents experienced domestic violence in their lifetime, and another 45 Respondents were actively fleeing domestic violence.

Respondents who participated in the 2017 PIT Summer Survey provided the following as factors contributing to their homelessness:

- Ask God
- I gave up a long time ago
- Nobody will help me
- I have bad credit
- We both work but can't find affordable housing
- My driver's license was stolen and I can't get anything now
- I can't stop drinking
- I am happy doing what I am doing
- I do not read or write
- My parents died and I have nowhere to live
- I am not homeless – I should have squatter rights
- My kids are in prison and I am raising my grandchildren

- I got kicked out of my apartment for too many people living there
- I am afraid out here

Additional comments were also captured from those who volunteered to help administer the survey:

- Found a brand new camp
- I had no idea it was this bad
- What can we do? We feel helpless
- We want to be part of the solution
- I am so sad
- Can we start a tent village?
- Why is there a camping ban? Where are they going to go?
- People have the wrong perception. They need to do what we did and talk to them.
- Most everyone we talked to does not want to be homeless
- There are a group of 8 high school kids living in tents and still going to school.

The following statistics were also presented by ATCAA during a public presentation on the results of the 2017 Summer PIT Survey:

- Children are the fastest growing homeless demographic in the United States
- Families make up approximately 41% of the homeless population
- The average age of a homeless person in the United States is 9 years old.

According to the report issued by ATCAA for this special Summer PIT Count, other censuses in the past are believed to have significantly undercounted the homeless population in the county due to fewer volunteers, federal requirements, and the fact that the surveys were conducted during what's typically the coldest time of the year (January).

Out of the total 711 homeless people counted in the September 2017 PIT census, 465 were age 25 and older, 45 were between the ages of 18 and 24, and 177 were younger than 18. The remaining 24 were categorized as "observations" because they appeared to be homeless but declined to take the survey.

The report also indicated that while much has been said in the general community about transients who come to the county from somewhere else, 375 people interviewed said they were from Tuolumne County, while 231 were from a county other than Tuolumne. Another 105 declined to say where they were from originally. The results further showed that 331 of homeless population counted were men, 274 were women, and one person between the age of 18 and 24 identified as transgender. Among the top reasons cited for becoming homeless were a lack of affordable housing, unemployment, low wages, addiction, disability and choice. Lack of affordable housing topped the list with 120 of those interviewed citing it as their primary reason for being homeless. Other reasons that individuals cited as the primary cause for being homeless included mental illness, probation or jail, grandparents raising grandchildren, eviction, fleeing domestic violence, and "do not know".

The following chart compares homeless data from Tuolumne County for the years 2011, 2013, and 2015. This information is taken from Tuolumne County Community Needs Assessment 2017, and is helpful in comparing the data from the HUD PIT Surveys over time. This data shows the number of homeless actually decreasing in Tuolumne County each time the survey was taken. When comparing this data (3 PIT surveys) with the data collected in the special summer PIT survey, it is easy to see that there are far more homeless than reported in the HUD PIT surveys. The summer survey of 2017 reveals that when the count is conducted during a less inclement time of year, the number of homeless counted is three times greater than what is counted in January, the coldest and wettest time of the year. The timing of the HUD PIT Survey may be

skewing the actual homeless count, thereby not providing a realistic or reliable number upon which to base planning or funding.

HOMELESSNESS

BACKGROUND

- Tuolumne County had 265 residents suffering from homelessness in 2015, a decrease from previous years.
- Amador and Calaveras counties also saw decreases in the number of people suffering from homelessness, many probably due to the 2015 Butte fire.
- The federal department of housing and urban development oversees the data collection for community surveys of homelessness. This is done through a volunteer effort, and on a limited basis, which may lead to skewed data. It is the largest data collection available on this topic, and as it is conducted in multiple communities, it is useful for comparison.

DATA

HOMELESS PERSONS 2015

		Amador	Calaveras	Tuolumne
2011	0-5	21	23	70
	6-17	33	27	108
	19-30	52	52	77
	31 - 59	86	68	100
	>60	10	3	13
	Unaccompanied	10	9	9
	Unknown/no answer		3	5
	TOTAL	212	185	382
2013	0-5	11	10	31
	6-17	24	15	41
	18-24	19	26	34
	25-59	98	75	221
	>60	7	6	31
	TOTAL	159	132	358
2015	0-5	8	6	22
	6-17	6	0	17
	18-24	17	13	29
	25-59	90	62	180
	>60	18	8	15
	Unknown	2	0	2
	TOTAL	141	89	265
	Homeless Veterans	Amador	Calaveras	Tuolumne
		16	11	29

Source Central Sierra Continuum of Care, Point-In-Time Homeless Census

FOOD BANK DATA

According to the Amador Tuolumne Community Action Agency Food Bank, in 2018, there were 189 individuals signed up at the food bank that identified as unsheltered homeless and received food that ATCAA delivers to the camps.

COMPARING TUOLUMNE'S HOMELESSNESS WITH CALIFORNIA'S HOMELESSNESS

The issue of homelessness in Tuolumne County may also be compared to state and other rates of homelessness by calculating the number of homeless per 100,000 population – this allows comparisons across the US and between states as well. The following chart is from the United States Interagency Council on Homeless Data for 2017. The chart shows estimates of people and families experiencing homelessness, based on the community point in time counts conducted in January 2017, as reported to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The rate of homelessness in each state is calculated using U. S. Census 2017 Population Estimates.

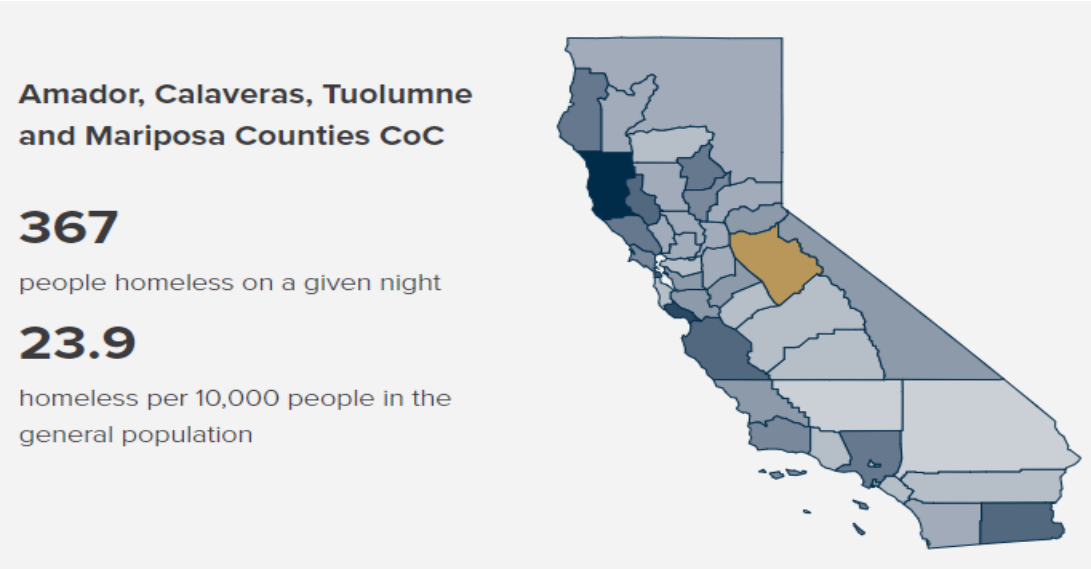
Statistics for **California**

Total Homeless Population	**134,278**
Total Family Households Experiencing Homelessness	**7,168**
Veterans Experiencing Homelessness	**11,472**
Persons Experiencing Chronic Homelessness	**37,360**
Unaccompanied Young Adults (Aged 18-24) Experiencing Homelessness	**15,458**
Rate of Homelessness per 100,000 Population	**342**

The next graphic is taken from the National Alliance to End Homelessness –

https://endhomelessness.org/homelessness-in-america/homelessness-statistics/state-of-homelessness-report/california/

The data is taken from 2017 Point in Time count (January 2017) and includes data for the Continuum of Care for Amador, Calaveras, Tuolumne, and Mariposa Counties. This data compares homeless rates "by region". In the four county CoC, the rate of homelessness was 367 homeless per 10,000 people in the general population whereas the statewide average is slightly lower at 342 homeless individuals per 10,0000 people.



COUNTY OF TUOLUMNE HUMAN SERVICE AGENCY STATISTICS

The County of Tuolumne Human Services Agency (County HSA) collects statistics on homelessness from clients participating in the CalWORKS Program which provides cash aid to families with children. The data is based on unconfirmed, self-attested information. As of July 31, 2018, a total of 193 individuals participating in the CalWORKs program reported being homeless. Approximately 109 of these were between the ages of birth to 18 years of age.

The County HSA also provides critical resources to lower income households. The number of individuals accessing services as of March 2019 includes:

- CalFresh (food stamps) – 4,268
- CalWORKs – 793
- Medi-Cal – 11,138

COUNTY OF TUOLUMNE PROBATION DEPARTMENT STATISTICS

As of January 17, 2019, County of Tuolumne's Probation Department reports a 10% homeless rate among those supervised on formal probation. Probation defines an individual as "homeless" if they have an unstable living status such as couch surfing, shelter, etc. Demographic data for this population is shown below.

Homeless by Gender	
Male	71%
Female	29%

Homeless by Age	
20-29	22%
30-39	43%
40-49	11%
50-59	17%
60-69	7%

Homeless by Race

Amer. Indian	6%
Asian	1%
Black	1%
Hispanic	8%
White	84%

HOMELESS/UNSTABLY HOUSED CHILDREN

From California Department of Education, California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System, for the academic year 2017-2018, the following data has been obtained as regards California homeless students enrolled in Tuolumne County schools:

There was a total of 288 homeless children enrolled in Tuolumne County Schools (elementary and secondary).

In Temporary Shelters	In Hotels or Motels	Temporarily Doubled Up	Temporarily Unsheltered	Total Number of Students Homeless in TC
31	14	227	16	288

According to the 2017 Homeless Assessment Report to Congress, unaccompanied homeless youth are much more likely to be unsheltered (55%) than all people experiencing homelessness (35%) or people experiencing homelessness as individuals (48%).

In addition to the above data, the California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS) Data specific to Tuolumne County's Secondary schools was also reviewed. The last report available is for the 2015-2016 school year. The survey is done every two years; therefore the 2017-2018 survey report is not yet available. The 2017-2018 survey is scheduled for release near the end of 2018.

The CHKS survey is administered by school staff, following detailed instructions. Students are surveyed only with the consent of parents or guardians. Each student's participation is voluntary, anonymous, and confidential. A target sample of students and the final number and percent of students who completed the survey (the participation rate) is shown, below:

Core Module Results

1. Survey Sample

Table A1.1
Student Sample Characteristics

	Grade 7	Grade 9	Grade 11	NT[A]
Student Sample Size				
Final number	328	405	292	25

Note: [A]NT includes continuation, community day, and other alternative school types.

The information shown in the table above should be compared to the total number of students enrolled in secondary schools in Tuolumne County, which is currently 1,392. The survey sample, therefore, represents approximately the following:

24% response for Grade 7
34.4% for Grade 9
21% for Grade 11

The percentage of response from students in Non-traditional schools is not included here.

The data shown in the table, below, is taken from Table A2.1, "Key Indicators of School Climate and Student Well-Being". Most important is the reported number (in percentages) of students that report "Experienced chronic sadness/hopelessness" – 28% of 7th graders, 32% of 9th graders, and 34% of 11th graders. The sample size was too small for the non-traditional student category. However, this statistic seems to reflect an overall experience for these students. Tuolumne County has a poverty level that's higher when compared to urban settings (see other data on poverty level information).

Mental and Physical Health				
Current alcohol or drug use‡	6	26	33	68
Current binge drinking‡	1	12	15	36
Very drunk or "high" 7 or more times	1	13	16	72
Current cigarette smoking‡	1	7	6	36
Experienced chronic sadness/hopelessness†	28	32	34	
Considered suicide†	na	20	19	32

Notes: Cells are empty if there are less than 25 respondents.
†Past 12 months; ‡Past 30 days; na—Not asked of middle school students.

Table A3.5, seen next, is important to this report in that the living situation for some students reflects that there are students living in other than a sheltered home. Please note that the data is reported in Percentages. This means that:

11% of 7th graders are homeless
10% of 9th graders are homeless
6% of 11th graders are homeless, and
16% of students in Non Traditional schools are homeless

Table A3.5 is seen below:

Table A3.5
Living Situation

	Grade 7 %	Grade 9 %	Grade 11 %	NT %
A home with one or more parents or guardian	89	90	94	84
Other relative's home	2	3	1	4
A home with more than one family	3	2	1	4
Friend's home	1	0	0	0
Foster home, group care, or waiting placement	0	0	0	4
Hotel or motel	0	0	0	0
Shelter, car, campground, or other transitional or temporary housing	0	1	1	0
Other living arrangement	5	3	2	4

Question HS/MS A.9: What best describes where you live? A home includes a house, apartment, trailer, or mobile home.
Note: Cells are empty if there are less than 25 respondents.

This self-reported information as shown in Table A3.5 validates the data collected in the Summer PIT Survey in September 2017, during which 8 students were found to be living in tents and still attending Summerville High School.

The next table, A3.7, reflects the impact of poverty on Tuolumne County secondary students – an average of 35% of the students who responded to the survey received free or reduced rate meals.

Table A 3.8, shown on the next page, is important because it reflects the number of children that report their participation in "Migrant Education Program" – some of these children may be included in either sheltered or in an unsheltered living situation (see Table A 3.5) due to the lack of available and affordable housing.

Table A3.7
Free or Reduced Price Meals Eligibility

	Grade 7 %	Grade 9 %	Grade 11 %	NT %
No	50	55	63	32
Yes	34	37	33	60
Don't know	17	8	4	8

Question HS/MS A.11: Do you receive free or reduced-price lunches at school? (Receiving free or reduced-price lunches means that lunch at school is provided to you for free or you pay less for it.)
Note: Cells are empty if there are less than 25 respondents.

Table A3.8
Participation in Migrant Education Program, Past 3 Years

	Grade 7 %	Grade 9 %	Grade 11 %	NT %
No	72	84	91	76
Yes	2	1	1	0
Don't know	27	16	9	24

Question HS/MS A.12: In the past three years, were you part of the Migrant Education Program or did your family move to find seasonal or temporary work in agriculture or fishing?
Note: Cells are empty if there are less than 25 respondents.

FOOD BANK DATA

According to the Amador Tuolumne Community Action Agency Food Bank, in 2018, there were 189 individuals signed up at the food bank that identified as unsheltered homeless and received food that ATCAA delivers to the camps.

HOUSING AVAILABILITY

Tuolumne County, along with the rest of California, is experiencing an increase in homelessness which many believe is at least in part fueled by the lack of affordable housing. During the recession, residential development in Tuolumne County slowed to a trickle. While development activity has increased in recent years, it remains far below pre-recession levels. The lack of inventory has had a negative effect on housing affordability. Rental housing availability in the county has been affected by a number of factors including:

- Home owners in Tuolumne County are opting to participate in short-term rental arrangements that cater to tourists or other temporary visitors as platforms such as Airbnb become increasingly popular,

- The influx of seasonal workers who take up temporary residence in Tuolumne County to carry out various tree mortality and fire recovery projects that have resulted from the bark beetle epidemic and the Rim Fire, and

- Limited residential development is occurring in the County.

The chart, below, reflects the total number of occupied housing units in Tuolumne County (data from the period 2012-2016 American Community Survey (ACS) 5 Year Estimates), and also shows that 32.1% of the available housing units are occupied by renters:

Owner-occupied housing units:	14,984
Renter-occupied housing units:	7,099
Total Occupied Housing Units:	22,083

RENTAL HOUSING AFFORDABILITY IN TUOLUMNE COUNTY

Many people who are currently occupying rental units, with low incomes, are at risk of homelessness. Ultimately, this is due to a lack of affordable housing. According to the 2012-2016 ACS Survey (referenced above) for Tuolumne County, 94% of households earning less than $20,000 overpay for rent. An affordable rent payment is considered to be at or below 30% of household gross income. Households earning between $20,000-$34,999 are not fairing much better. Approximately 84% of these households overpay for rent. Half of renters with incomes in the $35,000 - $49,999 range overpay for rent. As a point of reference, the median income for a family of four in Tuolumne County is $63,200 as defined by the Federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Department. (See “Household Income” Section for more income information for Tuolumne County).

The chart, below, is from the ACS Survey:

# of Renter Occupied Units & % Paying 30% or More of income to Occupy			
Annual Income	Total # of Rental Units	Total # of Rental Units with Rent > 30% of Income	% Paying >30% of Income for Rent
Less than $20,000	1,743	1,636	94%
$20,000 to $34,999	1,814	1,523	84%
$35,000 to $49,999	878	436	50%
$50,000 to $74,999	933	155	17%
$75,000 or more	1,012	63	6%
No Cash Rent	629	0	0%
Zero or negative Income	90	0	0%
	7,099	3,813	54%

The need for more affordable housing is demonstrated by data released in "Worst Case Housing Needs – 2017 Report to Congress"4 which stated that: "Only 62 affordable units are available per 100 very low-income renters, and only 38 units are available per 100 extremely low-income renters." The report further states: "Most cases of worst case needs are caused by severe rent burdens—paying more than one-half of income for rent." The table shown, below, clearly explains which households can have the worst case needs:

WHICH HOUSEHOLDS CAN HAVE WORST CASE NEEDS?

By definition, households that can have worst case needs are households that—

- Are renters.
- Have *very low incomes*; that is, incomes of no more than 50 percent of the Area Median Income (as adjusted for family size).
- Do not receive housing assistance.

The *"Worst Case Housing Needs Report to Congress 2017"* further reports that homeless individuals and families clearly have the greatest need for affordable or assisted housing. Homeless people, however, are not included in official estimates of worst case needs because the American Housing Survey (AHS) covers only housing units and the households that live in them, and persons experiencing homelessness, by definition, do not live in a housing unit and are not surveyed by the AHS. Therefore, the picture of housing affordability becomes even grimmer, given that homeless who may have some limited income (but are not housed) are not included in the data.

According to the National Low Income Housing Coalition Out of Reach 2018 Report, minimum wage earners in Tuolumne County have to work 68 hours per week to be able to afford a typical two-bedroom rental in the County. A household would need to earn $18.40 per hour or $38,280 per year in order to afford rent and utilities.

[4] Report prepared by U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Office of Policy Development and Research

While there are rental units available in Tuolumne County, these units are often financially inaccessible to the neediest families. In 2018, the breakdown of Tuolumne's Area Median Income was as follows:[5]

Table 1. Area Income Limits

Income Level	Number of Persons in Household			
	1	2	3	4
Extremely Low (0%-30% AMI)	$ 13,950	$ 16,460	$ 20,780	$ 25,100
Very Low Income (30%-50% AMI)	$ 23,250	$ 26,600	$ 29,900	$ 33,200
Low Income (50%-80% AMI)	$ 37,200	$ 42,500	$ 47,800	$ 53,100
Median Income (100% AMI)	$ 46,700	$ 53,350	$ 60,050	$ 66,700
Moderate Income (80%-120% AMI)	$ 56,050	$ 64,050	$ 72,050	$ 80,050

In general, a household should pay no more than 30 percent of total income for gross housing costs, including utilities. This means each income level's housing costs should not exceed the following amounts per month:

Table 2. Maximum Affordable Price Per Month (Calculated at 30% of Income Limit)

Income Level	Number of Persons in Household			
	1	2	3	4
Extremely Low (0%-30% AMI)	$ 349	$ 412	$ 520	$ 628
Very Low Income (30%-50% AMI)	$ 581	$ 665	$ 748	$ 830
Low Income (50%-80% AMI)	$ 930	$ 1,063	$ 1,195	$ 1,328
Median Income (100% AMI)	$ 1,168	$ 1,334	$ 1,501	$ 1,668
Moderate Income (80%-120% AMI)	$ 1,401	$ 1,601	$ 1,801	$ 2,001

In 2018, median rent prices in Tuolumne County were $795 ($997 with utilities) for a one-bedroom unit, $1,020 ($1,247 with utilities) for a two-bedroom unit, and $1,401 ($1,651 with utilities) for a three-bedroom unit.[6] [7] These costs far exceed a manageable amount for Extremely Low and Very Low income households. Notably, Very Low or Extremely Low income households make up 73% of the renter-occupied households in the City of Sonora, the only incorporated city in Tuolumne County.[8]

Lower-income households must compete for a limited number of more affordable units—or alternatively compete for government subsidies, such as Section 8.These affordable units experience low turnover and long waitlists, which further affects supply.

Extremely Low-Income Households (30% of area median income and below) are often unable to qualify for affordable units because their incomes are not high enough to pay the subsidized rent rate. Some of the affordable units in the county have project-based rental assistance which ensures that tenants pay no more than 30% of their income for rent and utilities. However, many of the affordable units have subsidized, below market rental rates, often with a tiered rent structure, that are more affordable to lower income households, but not necessarily affordable to households earning at or below 30% of the area median income. Most complexes have a minimum required income in order to rent a unit. A common requirement is that the household

[5] *State Income Limits for 2018*: http://www.hcd.ca.gov/grants-funding/income-limits/state-and-federal-income-limits/docs/inc2k18.pdf

[6] *Tuolumne County Rent Data:* https://www.rentdata.org/tuolumne-county-ca/2018

[7] Utilities estimates are based on *Stanislaus' Housing Authority's Utility Allowance Schedule.* Assumptions include apartments with <1,500 square feet and using natural gas (heating, cooking, etc.): http://www.stancoha.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/TuolumneCombinedUA2018.pdf

[8] Most recently available data from *City of Sonora Housing Element, 2014*: http://www.sonoraca.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/city-of-sonora-2014-2019-housing-element.pdf

have monthly income that is at least three times the amount of the rent. Even a subsidized rent of $550, for example, would require the tenant to have a monthly income of $1,650 or more. Many tenants receiving SSI or Social Security do not make enough to afford a unit in an affordable housing complex. According to data published by the Social Security Administration, the average Social Security Payment for retired individuals in 2018 was $1,413, for disabled workers receiving SSDI, the average was $1,198. For individuals on SSI (Social Security Disability) the monthly amount in California in 2019 is $931.72.

LIMITS TO RENTAL ASSISTANCE

A family or individual that receives government-funded rental assistance (e.g. Section 8 or Housing Choice Vouchers) is responsible for finding a suitable housing unit of the household's choice in the private market. Beyond the barrier of limited availability of rental housing, persons eligible for government assistance face additional barriers in convincing landlords to accept their tenancy because of landlords' negative perception of government-assisted tenants. The result is that citizens with rental assistance support find it increasingly challenging to utilize rental assistance and achieve housing stability.

Adding to the difficulty, government limits set on rental assistance put government assisted tenants at a disadvantage as compared to tenants who do not rely on government rental assistance. Federal rental programs are subject to Fair Market Rent (FMR) calculations which set limits on the amount of the rental subsidy provided to a household. Often, HUD sets one FMR for a large geographic region, resulting in a subsidy level that does not match the local rental market. In Tuolumne County, private market rents have outpaced the subsidy level available, rendering government assisted households unable to find rental housing that falls within their subsidy limit. In 2019, the FMR was $797 for a one-bedroom unit and utilities, and $992 for a two-bedroom unit and utilities.[9]

ATCAA offers rental and deposit assistance with ESG (Emergency Solutions Grant) funding from the Continuum of Care and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding from the County of Tuolumne. The California Department of Housing and Community Development, under its CESH (California Emergency Solutions & Housing) Program, issued a NOFA (Notice of Funding Availability) for the program in September/October 2018. In January of 2019, the Continuum of Care (Amador, Calaveras, Tuolumne and Mariposa Counties CoC) was awarded and received funding in the amount of $562,512. (The program funding provides grants to administrative entities to assist persons who are experiencing or are at risk of homelessness). The award granted to the Amador, Calaveras, Tuolumne and Mariposa Counties CoC is for operating support for emergency housing Interventions; systems support; development of a Plan addressing actions within the CoC service area and projected administration costs. 60% of those funds will be used for rental assistance, down payment, etc. According to the Notice of Funding Availability for the funding issued, "rental assistance provided pursuant to the award shall not exceed 48 months for each assisted household and rent payments shall not exceed two times the current HUD fair market rent for the local area"[10]. The County of Tuolumne Human Service Agency has partnered with ATCAA to provide deposit and rental assistance as well as hotel vouchers to assist County CalWORKs clients who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

[9] *FY 2018 Fair Market Rent Documentation in Tuolumne County:* https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/fmr/fmrs/FY2018_code/2018summary.odn
[10] http://www.hcd.ca.gov/grants-funding/active-funding/cesh/docs/NOFA_CESH.pdf

STATISTICS ON HOMELESS PEOPLE EXPERIENCING MENTAL ILLNESS

Through a research summary compiled by the National Treatment Advocacy Center, it is estimated that approximately one-third of the total homeless population includes individuals with serious, untreated mental illnesses. The Treatment Advocacy Center recently updated it's "backgrounder" titled "How Many Individuals with a Serious Mental Illness are Homeless", and the document examines the percentage of homeless individuals with serious mental illness and their abysmal quality of life. The "backgrounder" paper includes:

- Approximately 33 percent of the homeless are individuals with serious mental illnesses that are untreated;
- Many of these people suffer from schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorder, bipolar disorder or major depression;
- The homeless population has increased steadily in cities and small towns since the 1970s;
- In Massachusetts and Ohio, 27 and 36 percent of people released from mental institutions became homeless within 6 months;
- Previously hospitalized people were three times more likely to obtain food from the garbage;
- Studies show that psychotic individuals are much more likely to get assaulted or threatened while homeless;

According to HUD's 2016 Annual Homelessness Assessment Report, "of those who experience homelessness, approximately 202,297 people have a severe mental illness or a chronic substance use disorder. In January 2016, one in five people experiencing homelessness had a serious mental illness, and a similar percentage had a chronic substance use disorder."

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The County engaged in an extensive stakeholder engagement process that involved focus groups, key informant interviews and a community survey. HomeBase, a nonprofit public policy agency dedicated to ending homelessness, was hired by the County to facilitate a community stakeholder feedback process in accordance with the requirements of the No Place Like Home (NPLH) program.

FOCUS GROUPS

Six focus groups were conducted to inform the development of a County Homelessness Plan. Each focus group aligned to the stakeholder groups required by the NPLH program, including:

1. *Housing and Homeless Service Providers, Public Housing Authority, CoC*
   This group consisted of providers that offer services and housing for individuals experiencing homelessness. Two separate focus groups were dedicated to this important subset of stakeholders, each comprised of different participants to ensure a breadth of feedback was received. It also included representatives of family caregivers of persons living with serious mental illness, local public housing authority staff and local Continuum of Care representatives.

2. *Youth Providers*
This group consisted of representatives from the local county school district (Tuolumne County Schools), community college (Columbia College), and Juvenile Probation Program.

3. *Law Enforcement*
This group consisted of representatives from the county's fire and Sheriff's Offices, California Highway Patrol, the Tribal Security Department of the Tuolumne Bank of Me-Wuk Indians, as well as representatives from the District Attorney's office, the county jail, and county probation. City of Sonora staff also attended this session.

4. *Health Care*
This group consisted of representatives from the county's hospital and local health clinics, as well as a county health plan and County Behavioral Health and Public Health Departments.

5. *Consumers*
This group consisted of individuals with lived experience of homelessness and/or serious mental illness.

Focus group questions were designed to solicit detailed feedback from key stakeholders about a variety of County Homelessness Plan elements, including special challenges or barriers to serving people who are experiencing homelessness and serious mental illness, proposed solutions to reduce and end homelessness, and current resources in place to address homelessness.

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

Four key informant interviews, conducted by phone, further expanded the Stakeholder Engagement process. Participants included:

1. Turu VanderWiel, Sonora Police Chief
2. Raj Rambob, Executive Director of ATCAA
3. Alex Abarca, Director of Behavioral Health for M.A.C.T Health Board, Inc.
4. Kristin Millhoff, Executive Director of Area 12 Agency on Aging

Interview questions explored challenges, resources, and solutions to ending homelessness.

COMMUNITY-WIDE SURVEY

In conjunction with focus groups and interviews, Tuolumne County launched a 19-question community survey utilizing the platform SurveyMonkey. The community survey was open for two weeks and the public was actively encouraged to participate through outreach on various listservs, email lists, and media outlets. At the close of the survey, 657 community members responded with a completion rate of 84%. For complete survey results, *see Appendix I.*

PLAN DEVELOPMENT STAKEHOLDERS

Through the focus groups, interviews, and community-wide survey, the County administered a collaborative process that included community input from all the following groups.

1. *County and City of Sonora representatives with relevant experience from:*
   - Behavioral Health
   - Public Health
   - Probation/Criminal Justice

- Social Services
- Housing Division
- Sheriff's Office
- Sonora Police Department
- Sonora City staff

2. *The Central Sierra homeless Continuum of Care which has the County as part of its service area.*

3. *Housing and Homeless service providers, especially those with experience providing housing or services to those who are Chronically Homeless*

4. *Health care providers, including:*

- County health plans
- Community clinics and health center
- Other relevant providers, especially those implementing pilots of other programs that allow the County to use Medi-Cal or other non-MHSA funding to provide or enhance services provided to NPLH tenants or to improve tracking of health outcomes in housing

5. *The Stanislaus County Public Housing Authority, which the housing authority in Tuolumne County, and*

6. *Representatives of family caregivers of persons living with serious mental illness.*

7. *Behavioral Health Advisory Board, Board of Supervisors Housing Policy Committee, and City of Sonora Homeless Advisory Group.*

All stakeholder feedback received was addressed and considered as part of the development of this report. For the list of stakeholders who participated in the focus groups, and interviews see *Appendix J*. For a summary of major themes from the focus groups, please see *Appendix K*. For a list of Focus Group Questions, please see *Appendix L*.

COUNTY RESOURCES AND PARTNERS ADDRESSING HOMELESSNESS

The following list compiles resources and services identified by focus group participants, key stakeholder interviews, community survey respondents, and County staff. It is important to note that the listed resources are subject to specific eligibility criteria, availability of funding, program enrollment and other program considerations. This list is not comprehensive but instead provides a snapshot of services and resources available to serve people experiencing or at risk of homelessness in Tuolumne County. A more comprehensive list of existing services in found in Appendix M.

Services Available in Tuolumne County

Resource/Service	Organization
Case Management	• Area 12 Agency on Aging • Anthem Blue Cross • ATCAA • Center for Non-Violent Community • Give Someone a Chance • Tuolumne County Behavioral Health • Tuolumne County Probation Treatment Team

	• Tuolumne County Social Services • DRAIL (Disability Resource Agency for Independent Living)
Clothing	• Tuolumne County Schools • Nancy's Hope
Thrift Items	• Salvation Army • Vets Helping Vets
Behavioral Health Services	• Tuolumne County Behavioral Health • Behavioral Health Enrichment Center • Columbia College • District Attorney's Office • MACT Health Board, Inc. • Tuolumne County Probation • Mathiesen Memorial Health
Emergency Shelters	• ATCAA – family shelter with 25 beds • CNVC- domestic violence shelter with 12 beds
Permanent Supportive Housing	• Cabrini House-5 beds-County of Tuolumne • Washington Street Shared Housing–6 beds – County of Tuolumne • Hospital Road Apartments – in escrow- 9 units- Stanislaus County Housing Authority
Food Banks/Grocery Funds/Hot Meals (schedule attached as Appendix)	• Adventist Health • ATCAA • Interfaith • Columbia College • David Lambert Center • Jamestown High School • Sonora High School • Tribal Security • Various Churches/Feed Net
Rental Assistance/Housing/Diversion Financial Assistance	• ATCAA • CNVC • County of Tuolumne CalWORKs • Catholic Charities • Salvation Army • Stanislaus County Housing Authority • California Indian Manpower • Me-Wuk Tribal TANF
Landlord Engagement	• ATCAA • Stanislaus County Housing Authority
Risk Mitigation Fund	• ATCAA
Screenings for Mental Health	• Area 12 Agency on Aging • Tuolumne County Behavioral Health • Tuolumne County Juvenile Hall
Showers	• Give Someone a Chance Shower Bus • The Lambert Center • The County Enrichment Center • Various churches • Columbia College

Temporary Hotel Stays	• ATCAA • MACT Health Board, Inc. • Salvation Army
Transportation to appointments	• Mathiesen Memorial Health • Vets Helping Vets • Give Someone a Chance • David Lambert Center • County of Tuolumne Behavioral Health
Victim/Legal Assistance	• District Attorney's Office • Interfaith • Catholic Charities
SB 1152 Requirements for Discharging Homeless Patients	• 2018 Legislation requiring hospitals to increase planning & services when discharging homeless patients. This potentially will be a benefit to homeless patients and a challenge for hospitals and their service partners

LIST OF PARTNERS IN ENDING HOMELESSNESS

With the help of many valuable partners, outlined below, Tuolumne County is committed to making progress on a variety of initiatives aimed at preventing and ending Homelessness. These partners and key stakeholders will work together to establish a more coordinated, community-wide response to the complex issue of homelessness.

- Amador Tuolumne Community Action Agency (ATCAA)
- Central Sierra Continuum of Care
- Center for Non-Violent Community (CNVC)
- David Lambert Center
- Enrichment Center
- County Sheriff's Office and City of Sonora Police Department
- City of Sonora staff and City Council
- County Human Services Agency; Behavioral Health, Social Services, Public Health, Housing Division-Community Resources Agency, Board of Supervisors
- Give Someone a Chance (GSAC)
- Stanislaus County Housing Authority
- Interfaith Community Services
- Superintendent of Schools

COUNTY EFFORTS TO PREVENT CRIMINALIZATION OF HOMELESSNESS

Tuolumne County Sheriff's office spearheaded a month-long effort to combat problems associated with homelessness in Jamestown. Undersheriff (at that time) Bill Pooley, formed a community response team that included himself and two other deputies after he conducted a Jamestown Town Hall meeting with business owners and other interested community members on July 26, 2017. The Town Hall meeting was attended by about 70 Jamestown residents. Several meetings were held over the following month, and the Sheriff's Office increased their presence throughout Jamestown, getting to better know the residents, businesses, and the homeless themselves. As a result, crime decreased, and homeless people needing assistance with behavioral health issues were referred for those services. The greater majority of the challenges in Jamestown were associated with a small number of homeless persons. Jamestown business owners continued to meet with the Sheriff's Office while the Business Watch program developed. Tuolumne County Behavioral Health Staff also began riding with the Sheriff's Office to engage homeless persons in an effort to provide services to individuals that would accept services. The

collaborative effort between multiple partners resulted in a reduction of homelessness in that area, without criminalizing the homeless individuals[11].

During the September 2017 efforts with Jamestown, Undersheriff Pooley (who is now Sheriff Pooley), envisioned a countywide effort similar to that one, but there wasn't enough manpower to do that work. On January 17, 2019, Sheriff Pooley reported in the Union Democrat that the effort he envisioned is about to change with the addition of three new school resource deputies thanks to recent grants received by the Tuolumne County Sheriff's Office. Three new school resource deputies will be added. They will be working in the schools during school hours, then on vacation time, or spring break, they will focus on community issues. Sheriff Pooley stated: "It's not a perfect solution, but at least we're being proactive." The Sheriff's Office also plans to work with the Sonora Police Department on a similar, community oriented project in the city of Sonora[12].

In July of 2017, Chief Turu VanderWiel, Sonora City Police Department, reached out to other homelessness stakeholders to let them know that within his agency, he was organizing a Community Engagement Team to be responsible for tracking and managing issues relating to homelessness within the City of Sonora. Being aware that the homelessness issues involved more than just the criminal aspect of homelessness, he wanted to arrange for a network of professionals to strategize with, and meet quarterly with these other stakeholders/professionals as a means for enhancing working relationships and to discuss expectations between respective entities. The City of Sonora Police Department's Engagement Team consisted of two patrol officers, who would continue to work their regular assigned duties, but also would receive additional training and be tasked with community-related problems such as homelessness.

To reduce and prevent the criminalization of homelessness, each officer at the Sonora Police Department receives 40 hours of training to work with clients suffering from different mental health illnesses. In addition, the Sonora Police Department is currently working with the National Association on Mental Illness to develop and implement an additional 8-hour crisis intervention training for all officers, and further training for all field officers.

Along with the department's personal relationships with various individuals experiencing homelessness around the county, Sonora's officers "generally understand the limited resources the homeless population has."[13] As a result of all the above, the department rarely issues citations.

It should be noted that Sonora City Council passed an ordinance to ban camping on public land or private property without permission in September 2017.[14] Regardless, instead of enforcement, officers are trained to educate individuals on the ban, and provide suggestions for legal camping. Often, officers will simply "encourage people to move on."[15]

Through the award of an SB82 Triage Grant in 2014, Tuolumne County Behavioral Health received funds to further help them with addressing behavioral health crises through triaging clients in the field. It was through this effort, that the department was available to the Sheriff's Office to ride along with them in the field in Jamestown to work with homeless individuals that needed services. The SB82 Crisis Triage Grant Program funds are furthering the work of the Behavioral Health Department staff in the field to respond quickly to law enforcement when individuals are encountered who may need crisis assessment and referral to services, including

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[11] The Union Democrat, Sonora, California, Thursday, January 17, 2019 "Sheriff Plans to Work More with Communities on Homelessness"
[12] The Union Democrat, January 17, 2019
[13] Phone interview with Sonora Police Chief Turu VanderWiel.
[14] *The Union Democrat, Oct. 2017*: https://www.uniondemocrat.com/localnews/5667291-151/city-of-sonora-camping-ban-takes-effect
[15] Ibid.

homeless persons in the County, as well as in the City of Sonora. This type of collaboration further helps to decrease the criminalization of the homeless, particularly those who are mentally ill.

Tuolumne County Behavioral Health SUD Unit and Tuolumne County Jail jointly operate the "CASE" (Clean and Sober Experiences) Program, based in Tuolumne County Jail. The target population for this program is any person who is currently incarcerated in the jail and who has at least thirty days or two months of incarceration ahead of them. Potential participants must apply to participate in the program, and applicants are approved for the program upon meeting one or more of the criteria and a verbal statement from the individual concerning a mental illness diagnosis (co-occurring disorder). An individualized care plan is established. The CASE program counselor conducts intake and assessment needs, referral to mental health services if determined, one on one counseling and working on an "In Cell Self Study". Participation in this program includes planning for re-entry and re-entry assistance, which may include placement into residential treatment as an alternative, or supplement to their sentence, recovery programs, housing, education, vocational opportunities, clothing or food. This program offers prevention of homelessness and helps to prevent criminalization of homelessness to those exiting jail and re-entering society.

According to the website for the Treatment Advocacy Center[16], "Fifty years of failed mental health policy have placed law enforcement on the front lines of mental illness crisis response and turned jails and prisons into the new asylums. Deinstitutionalization, outdated treatment laws demanding a person become violent before intervention, discriminatory federal Medicaid funding practices and the prolonged failure by states to fund their mental health systems drive those in need of care into the criminal justice and corrections systems, rather than into the public health system where they belong."

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ACT AND SERVICES TO HOMELESS

Full Service Partnership (FSP) Program: TCBHD operates the Full Service Partnership (FSP) Program that provides comprehensive mental health services for individuals, and/or families who have been diagnosed with a serious mental illness and would benefit from intensive supports and services. FSP services are provided to children, transition age youth, adults, and older adults. TCBHD provides extensive support services to achieve recovery, wrap around case management, and rehabilitation services for participants in the program. Clients are referred from the community or from within the agency and, if they meet the eligibility criteria for the program, they are assigned to a case manager. TCBHD's Full Service Partnership Program embraces client-driven services and supports by fostering a team approach and partnership between the client, when possible the client's family, and the provider. Specific to the FSP program are a low staff to client ratio, 24/7 crisis access, and individualized services. FSP programs may assist with housing, employment, and education. In addition, mental health services and integrated treatment is provided for individuals who have a co-occurring disorder or more than one diagnosed condition. Services can be provided to individuals in their homes, the community and other field locations. FSP Peer supports are included in the wrap-around services provided. The FSP Program was designed to meet the needs of this small, rural county.

Tuolumne County Behavioral Health Benefits & Resources Specialist: TCBHD's BH Benefits and Resources Specialist assists clients to apply for benefits, and also provides linkage and referral services to housing resources for homeless clients.

[16]*Treatment Advocacy Center is a national 501(c)3 nonprofit organization dedicated to eliminating legal and other barriers to the timely and effective treatment of severe mental illness. The organization promotes laws, policies and practices for the delivery of psychiatric care and supports the development of innovative treatments for and research into the causes of severe and persistent psychiatric illnesses, such as schizophrenia and bipolar disorder.*

Current linkage services available for the homeless population:
The BH Benefits and Resources Specialist links homeless clients to housing resources as follows:

1. For those homeless who do have income:
   a. Clients are urged to contact ATCAA for the Rapid Re-Housing Program. The client must have a written eviction notice and/or currently be homeless to meet the criteria.
   b. Referral to several local landlords that have units available to rent.
   c. A weekly print out of newly posted available rentals and rooms for rent in the area is provided to those homeless who may have income.

2. When an individual is unsheltered (i.e., awaiting opening at emergency shelter), referral is made to Salvation Army (may provide temporary motel lodging, as do some churches).

3. Tents & sleeping bags can be provided through the Benefits & Resources Specialist on a "one time per year policy". (These are provided by the Salvation Army to the county for distribution as per the policy noted).

4. For those homeless who do NOT have income:
   a. Referral to local shelter through ATCAA.
   b. Homeless Veterans are referred to the local VA for assistance.
   c. Victims of domestic violence are referred to Center for a Non-Violent Community.
   d. Homeless individuals may be referred to the FSP Program as per the department's FSP Referral Policy. All eligibility criteria must be met to qualify. There is limited Supported Housing availability for full service partners.

<u>Lambert Community Center:</u> Lambert Community Center provides outreach and engagement resources in response to mental illness, addiction, poverty, and homelessness in Tuolumne County. Services include:

- Internet access for job search and support for applications
- Access to a Benefits Specialist by appointment
- Food available daily
- Referral to other community resources and needs; social and emotional support

<u>MHSA Housing Program:</u>

The MHSA Housing Program was created following State Executive Order S-07-06 which created a state-controlled dedicated funding source for financing the capital and operating costs associated with the development, acquisition, construction, and/or rehabilitation of permanent supportive housing for individuals with mental illness and their families. In 2008, a total of $400 million in MHSA funds statewide were set aside in the MHSA Housing Program for the creation of affordable housing opportunities for people who have a serious mental illness, that are homeless or at-risk of homelessness. Of this $400 million, Tuolumne County received an allocation of $797,700. On September 7, 2010, the Tuolumne County Board of Supervisors approved the formation of a nonprofit corporation having the name Tuolumne County Behavioral Health Housing, Inc. (TCBHH). TCBHH's specific and primary purpose was to own and manage the Tuolumne County's MHSA Housing Project (s). State and local MHSA funds were used to support the creation of the Washington Street Housing Project (which currently provides housing and support services for Tuolumne County residents who are severely mentally ill). The home is located in downtown Sonora.

In April of 2014, the Tuolumne County Board of Supervisors approved the MHSA Update to the FY 13/14 MHSA Annual Plan, which included the transfer of CSS funds to CSS/General Systems

Development Program, for the purpose of acquiring additional MHSA Housing. The new project is supported in the same way as the current Washington Street Housing Project. The property purchased with this funding is known as Cabrini House in Jamestown, California. The purchase of this property allowed for additional transitional and permanent supportive housing options for CSS Full Service Partnership (FSP) clients, further enhancing the efforts toward maintaining recovery and wellness at the lowest levels of care possible.

CENTRAL SIERRA CONTINUUM OF CARE (COC) & COORDINATED ENTRY

The Central Sierra Continuum of Care is a four-county CoC, serving Amador, Calaveras, Mariposa, and Tuolumne Counties. It meets on a monthly basis to promote a community–wide commitment to the goal of ending homelessness; provides funding for efforts by nonprofit providers and State and local governments to quickly re-house homeless individuals and families to minimize trauma and dislocation; promotes access to and effective utilization of mainstream programs; and optimizes self-sufficiency among individuals and families experiencing homelessness.

The Coordinated Entry System, operated by the Amador Tuolumne Community Action Agency (ATCAA), launched in 2017. It has multiple access points including four designated Assessment Hubs (one in each county) where participants can receive a Coordinated Access Housing Assessment. At the Hubs, Housing Coordinators conduct assessments Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., for all homeless populations. Assessment questions are separated by singles and families for scoring and placement using an electronic format in HMIS. On completion of an assessment, a vulnerability score is produced and that score is used to prioritize a household for assistance. The Tuolumne County Hub is operated by Amador Tuolumne Community Action Agency. However, service providers such as Behavior Health, CalWORKs, Veteran's Services, domestic violence providers, and health and human services staff from all four counties participate in the Housing Determination calls and assist with referral, and ongoing case management services. This ensures collaborative efforts, streamlining of all services, and follow through from agencies. The Central Sierra Coordinated Entry System makes referrals to all projects receiving ESG and CoC Program funds as well as other housing and homelessness services.

Information gathered from the assessment is used to determine which housing intervention is best suited to end the household's homelessness including, Permanent Supportive Housing, Rapid Re-housing, Prevention Services, or Emergency Shelter referral. When a housing unit becomes available the Housing Determination Committee discusses the clients at the top of the priority list to determine an eligible housing match into Permanent Supportive Housing. Clients are selected based on the prioritization order, except for housing with specific sub-populations requirements e.g. veterans housing. When making housing placement decisions the Housing Determination Committee takes a clients' known preference into account. Clients that are approved and find housing are assisted as quickly as possible. Tuolumne County will have additional Housing Navigation services in Feb 2019. These much needed services move families and individuals more quickly into a stable situation.

Focus group feedback revealed that there are substantial knowledge gaps among stakeholders about what Coordinated Entry is, and how households can be referred in to the System. While some stakeholders had a high-level understanding of Coordinated Entry, others hadn't heard of Coordinated Entry at all. For those who knew about Coordinated Entry, some felt that the System currently involved only a small subset of community partners, and that expansion of partners and increased collaboration was needed to inform planning and system change efforts.

SERVICE AND OUTREACH CHALLENGES

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Fifty-seven percent (57%) of community survey respondents indicated that lack of affordable housing was among the top three barriers facing people experiencing homelessness in Tuolumne County. This concern was further highlighted by focus group participants.

Stakeholders noted the following challenges regarding housing in the county:

- No specific housing options/programs exist for justice-involved individuals after release
- Poor credit is a barrier for prospective renters and there are limited credit repair resources
- Criminal record checks are a barrier for prospective tenants
- Limited affordable housing opportunities are available for extremely low-income households, such as those on fixed incomes (ex. seniors, people with disabilities)
- Limited one-bedroom units are available for individuals who qualify for one-bedroom rental assistance
- Limited assisted living facilities exist
- Some affordable housing units are currently in substandard condition and need significant repair
- Inventory lists of affordable housing units are not updated or consolidated for ease of accessibility
- Stringent tenant vetting criteria utilized by property management companies present challenges to homeless and at-risk households seeking rental units
- No existing programs that match homeless or at-risk households with roommates for a shared housing arrangement

Survey feedback:

- 57% of community survey respondents indicated that lack of affordable housing was among the top three barriers facing people experiencing homelessness in Tuolumne County (question 7).
- 22% of respondents indicated that the lack of affordable housing was a specific challenge when providing services to individuals experiencing homelessness (question 13).
- 46% of respondents support the development of affordable housing as a solution for addressing homelessness (question 17).

INADEQUATE SHELTER OPTIONS

Two emergency shelters make up the inventory of year-round emergency shelter beds in Tuolumne County. The Center for a Non Violent Community (CNVC) operates a 12-bed shelter exclusively for women and children escaping domestic violence and the Amador-Tuolumne Community Action Agency (ATCAA) operates a 25-bed shelter for individuals and families who are sober and actively seeking employment. Both shelter facilities report average utilization of 100% or greater over the past year.

In extreme weather conditions the county operates temporary warming or cooling day centers and on rare occasion, night shelters. Operated by the county Office of Emergency Services, in conjunction with community partners such as the Red Cross, these facilities are only operated when there is an extreme heat or cold “emergency” that poses a serious threat to the community.

Stakeholders noted the following challenges with emergency shelters in the county:

- Limited shelter bed availability across the board for all demographics
- No dedicated shelter capacity for single adult males
- No dedicated shelter capacity for unaccompanied minors or Transitional Age Youth (TAY)
- Shelters stays are time-limited (30-90 days) resulting in cyclical instability
- High barriers to entering shelter, including sobriety and employment search requirements
- Shelter rules prohibit pets which keeps people from accessing shelters

- Preferential treatment for some clients over others

More than 56% of community survey respondents indicated that lack of homeless shelter was among the top three barriers facing people experiencing homelessness in Tuolumne County.

- 10% of respondents noted the lack of shelter as a specific challenge that arises when serving individuals experiencing homelessness (question 13).
- 7% of respondents stated the need to increase shelter availability and capacity (question 19).

LACK OF FUNDING/FUNDING RESTRICTIONS

Stakeholders repeatedly mentioned the lack of funding for homelessness programs. Funding challenges include funds to purchase shelters and permanent supportive housing, operating funds for shelters, and sufficient funding for rental assistance.

- 34% of respondents indicated that lack of funding is a barrier to addressing homelessness.

LACK OF AGENCIES/SERVICES DEDICATED TO PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

Outreach to homeless services currently occur in several ways throughout Tuolumne County, via several non-profit agencies, as well as through county and city agencies. Those providing outreach to homeless include:

1. ATCAA provides outreach through the Coordinated (Housing) Entry (via the Continuum of Care) process.

2. The David Lambert Community Center provides outreach and engagement opportunities to homeless and others onsite.

3. Tuolumne County Enrichment Center provides shower and laundry facilities to behavioral health clients who are also homeless.

4. Tuolumne County Behavioral Health homeless outreach through:
   a. Full Service Partnership Program for all ages, includes outreach to mentally ill homeless/at risk of homeless individuals
   b. Benefits & Resources Peer Specialist position works with individuals coming out of incarceration or hospitalization and those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. (The SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR) model is used to increase access to benefits.)
   c. SB82 Crisis Triage Grant Program for behavioral health workers to work in the field with law enforcement to do outreach and crisis intervention with individuals with mental health issues, including mentally ill homeless.
   d. HMIOT (Homeless Mentally Ill Outreach and Treatment) funds expand current homeless mentally ill outreach and treatment services as well as to help the county improve services to the homeless mentally ill in Tuolumne County.

5. Give Someone a Chance (GSAC) conducts outreach through its mobile shower bus initiative at various locations in the county.

6. Tuolumne County Sheriff's Office partnered with Tuolumne County Behavioral Health and homeless service providers to do outreach to homeless encampments in Jamestown during 2017.

While these outreach efforts by multiple agencies are useful, stakeholder feedback indicated that there is a lack of systematized, dedicated, and routine outreach which can be a significant barrier to reaching and ultimately serving people experiencing homelessness in the county.

When it comes to serving children and adolescents with serious emotional disturbance who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, the most significant hurdles are identification and engagement. While youth are hesitant to self-identify, parents of youth with serious emotional disturbance are often unaware of how to access services, and apprehensive about accessing needed services for fear of losing their children on account of their living situation. Stakeholders working with children and youth noted that Hispanic youth were less likely to identify as homeless and in need of mental health services than their non-Hispanic peers, making identification a more significant barrier to serving this population. Stakeholders also acknowledged that services sites having limited Spanish speaking staff is a barrier to engaging with Hispanic youth.

Stakeholders made the following statements about outreach, identification, and engagement:

- We don't know who we aren't reaching
- Given the nature of the physical landscape in Tuolumne County, encampments are often hidden in densely forested areas
- We need to identify people who are at risk of losing their housing before they do
- Often people are tumbling toward homelessness and we miss the opportunity to assist because they reach out after housing has already been lost
- Clients need an advocate that helps walk them through the program from start to finish
- Youth aren't self-identifying
- There is not enough outreach for children and/or young adults who are dealing with drug addiction.
- More public outreach about services available is needed

Survey feedback:

- 28% of survey respondents noted the negative perceptions/stereotypes about people experiencing homelessness as a barrier to addressing homelessness (question 7).
- 6% of respondents stated that families do not identify due to a fear of separation from their children (question 13).
- 6% noted that clients will occasionally refuse to get assistance (question 13).

1. While not one of the "top three (3) barriers to addressing homelessness in Tuolumne County", stakeholders have identified that "lack of agencies/services dedicated to people experiencing homelessness" as an important consideration as a potential barrier to preventing homelessness. Lack of agencies/services dedicated to people experiencing homelessness (32%).

The "lack of agencies/services dedicated to people experiencing homelessness" was identified by stakeholders as the 4th ranked barrier to serving homeless in Tuolumne County. Survey participants were also asked to respond to a series of "open ended" questions in the survey. The results of those open ended questions are important because they point to the "lack of services" category identified as a barrier to addressing homelessness.

1. The first question asked respondents to identify concerns about homelessness. A total of 469 responses were received to this open ended question, with the results as follows:
   - 8% cited lack of services or resources as a concern about homelessness.
   - 8% identified a lack of mental health services as a concern for homeless.
   - 7% said current services/program enable, but don't empower, homeless persons.

2. For those who are providing some services to homeless in the community, survey participants were asked what challenges they observed in serving the homeless population that arise – 214 responses were received:
   - 7% said “lack of mental health services”
   - 6% identified service barriers including paperwork, documentation requirements, tenant requirements, lengths of stay, and
   - 2% said lack of services for persons exiting jail

3. Survey participants were also asked to describe any other concerns or ideas about homelessness in Tuolumne County that they would like to address – a total of 239 responses were received:
   - 17% stated that services/program enable, but don’t empower, homeless persons, and
   - 9% stated they wanted improved mental health services

LACK OF EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

22% of surveyed community members identified lack of employment as a cause of homelessness. Without permanent housing, people experiencing homelessness have challenges seeking and maintaining employment, utilizing job training programs, or improving job skills by participating in vocational training, or formal education. Stigma concerning homeless individuals creates an additional barrier for many.

TRANSPORTATION CHALLENGES

Stakeholders frequently noted transportation as a barrier for individuals and families attempting to access housing, primary health, behavioral health and other supportive services in Tuolumne County.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Tuolumne County has a total area of 2,274 square miles.[17] Containing six principal towns, numerous villages and tribal lands, the rural county is made up of much forested and agricultural lands. The expansive county is serviced by Tuolumne County Transit which operates six fixed routes Monday through Friday and dial-a-ride services to eligible candidates on weekdays. On Saturdays, dial-a-ride services are available to the general public subject to availability and advance reservation.[18] There are also limited transportation services for homeless or at-risk populations through non-profit service providers and health care partners who provide transportation to/from appointments on an ad hoc basis.

Adding to transportation difficulties, Tuolumne County is currently serviced by a single taxi cab company, resulting in long wait times and limited accessibility. Primary health and hospital staff noted that the inability to access taxi transportation services greatly limited their ability to discharge patients experiencing a housing crisis, safely, and further limited their ability to connect patients experiencing a housing crisis to a shelter or other homeless service provider. Law enforcement officials also identified transportation as an issue, particularly for justice-system involved individuals who find it challenging to access mandatory appointments and check-ins after release.

[17] *County Quick Facts*, United States Census Bureau: https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/tuolumnecountycalifornia
[18] *Tuolumne County Transit*: https://www.tuolumnecountytransit.com/

Stakeholders frequently noted transportation as a barrier for individuals and families attempting to access housing, primary health, behavioral health and other supportive services in Tuolumne County. Stakeholders indicated the following transportation challenges:

- Bus stops are not closely located to nonprofits, social service sites, shelters, and/or food banks making it difficult to access services and appointments
- Infrequent bus service makes it difficult for individuals to access services. Route schedules vary. For example, the Sonora route runs hourly from 7:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Monday through Friday with dial a ride available on the weekends. The Jamestown to Sonora to Columbia route runs during the week at two hour intervals with four buses daily. There are five buses daily to Tuolumne City.
- Bus stops are not close to where people experiencing homelessness live, including encampments, making it difficult to meaningfully participate in the community
- Bus routes/stops do not meet the needs of homeless students seeking access to school
- Transit system does not conduct service on weekends or evenings
- No transportation in Groveland/South County area
- Limited bus fare subsidies available for low income individuals
- The majority of services are located in the city of Sonora, making it difficult for those who do not reside in Sonora to access them

Survey feedback:

- More than 20% of community survey respondents indicated that transportation was among the top three barriers facing people experiencing homelessness in Tuolumne County (question 7).
- 7% of respondents indicated that transportation was a significant challenge in serving individuals experiencing homelessness (question 13).
- 5% of respondents noted the lack of transportation as a concern related to homelessness in Tuolumne County (question 19).

LACK OF COORDINATION AND INFORMATION SHARING AMONG PROVIDERS

1. Information Sharing

Stakeholders noted that cross system coordination and information sharing between service providers remains an ongoing challenge in Tuolumne County. While there are multiple organizations providing homeless services in Tuolumne, each has a different access point, separate intake processes, and varying eligibility criteria. This results in much administrative duplication, and a system that is challenging to navigate for people experiencing homelessness. With no centralized access point, consumers must seek information and assistance from each individual provider to try to meet their needs.

Accessibility of information about the services and resources available to serve people experiencing homelessness, or who are at risk of homelessness, is limited. Service providers and currently or formerly homeless consumers expressed the need for better information sharing forums and consolidated resource guides. Tuolumne County Social Services Consortium emerged as one forum where some information dissemination currently occurs but the need for expanded opportunities was clear.

Stakeholders made the following statements about information sharing:

- There are few forums for information sharing
- Don't have strong systems for sharing the information
- Would be valuable to create a collaborative data-sharing agreement so that we can share some information between each other
- Services and resources changes – folks don't always feel like they know what is out there
- Lists of available affordable housing are not updated frequently enough

Survey feedback:

- 14% of survey respondents indicated the lack of coordination and information sharing among service providers as a major barrier to addressing homelessness in Tuolumne County (question 7).
- 35% of respondents indicated that they did not know where to find information about services/resources to serve persons at risk of, or experiencing, homelessness (question 8).
- 32% of respondents indicated a lack of familiarity with local efforts to address homelessness (question 9).
- When asked about specific challenges that arise in serving individuals experiencing homelessness, 5% of respondents stated limited follow-through with clients, such as after making a referral (question 13).

2. Referrals

Challenges exist for providers and homeless advocates who refer homeless or at-risk clients to housing and services within the county. Stakeholder feedback revealed that referral processes differed greatly across agencies and service providers. For some providers, a referral was defined by simply giving a client information about another organization who might service their needs. For other providers, a referral was made by making a phone call on behalf of the client. In limited circumstances, referrals were made by physically transporting the client to another agency where the client was guided through the process required to access assistance at that agency. Service providers revealed that there is no formalized way to know if a referral has been successful. Further, information sharing about client level data is almost non-existent, making it difficult for providers to understand what services a client may have already accessed.

It is worth noting that weekly case conference telephone calls provide one forum for client information sharing but that the opportunity is limited to clients who are eligible for Coordinated Entry housing placement. These case conference calls, held by the Housing Determination Committee, are a venue for provider agencies who have served the client to discuss needs of the client, determine program eligibility, and make housing placement decisions.

Stakeholders indicated the following coordination/referral challenges:

- Lack of coordination among homeless service and behavioral health providers
- Lack of centralized access point or service hub for services and housing
- Data systems operate in silos and information sharing about clients is non-existent
- Limited case management resources which are critical in guiding people through the system
- Referrals have been unsuccessful – "All talk, no action"
- Referral process is ever-changing and relationship based. If your staff contact moves from an agency, you have to start all over again

Survey feedback:

See *Coordination—Information Sharing.*

SOLUTIONS TO REDUCE HOMELESSNESS IN TUOLUMNE COUNTY

The top seven themes that emerged from the community survey on homelessness, the focus groups with key stakeholders and other data sources are:

1. Lack of affordable housing (57%);
2. Lack of homeless shelters (56%);
3. Lack of funding/funding restrictions (34%).
4. Lack of agencies/services dedicated to people experiencing homelessness (32%)
5. Lack of employment opportunities (22%)
6. Transportation Challenges (20%)
7. Lack of coordination and information sharing among service providers (14%)

This section will discuss possible solutions to address service and outreach challenges identified in this report. Some of solutions can be achieved with existing staff and funding. Others will require additional resources and community support. As a rural county with limited resources, it may not be possible to implement all of these suggested solutions. However, this report can serve as a guide for moving forward.

LACK OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Housing to address homelessness needs to:

- Be affordable to extremely low-income households earning at or below 30% of the area median income,
- Ensure that tenants have access to services to help them remain in housing, and
- Follow a "housing first" model that accommodates individuals with substance abuse, past criminal records, evictions, etc.

The public appears supportive of efforts for improving access to affordable housing. In Question 7 of the community survey, 57% identified the lack of affordable housing in Tuolumne County as the primary barrier to addressing homelessness, making it the top answer choice. In Question 13, 22% of respondents cited the lack of affordable housing as a specific challenge when working with the individuals experiencing homelessness (this answer was once again the top choice). For Question 17, 46% of respondents responded that the development of affordable housing would have the most impact on reducing homelessness and its effects on Tuolumne County.

Short Term Solutions:

Shared Housing Policies - Survey rental assistance programs to determine program rules concerning rental assistance for individuals renting a room in a home and work to ensure that programs allow shared tenancy, to the extent allowed by each program. Coordinate with case workers to make sure they are aware of the shared housing option for their clients.

Raise the Fair Market Rent – The county will request that the Stanislaus County Housing Authority conduct a Fair Market Rent (FMR) study in Tuolumne County. Currently, HUD calculates Fair Market Rent at the 40th percentile gross rent for typical non-substandard rental units occupied by recent movers in a local housing market.19 However, multiple communities have successfully challenged HUD's calculations through their own studies—while still adhering to the

[19] *Federal Register:* https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2015/06/02/2015-13430/establishing-a-more-effective-fair-market-rent-fmr-system-using-small-area-fair-market-rents-safmrs

HUD methodology—in order to increase rental subsidy limits.20 During focus groups, the Stanislaus County Housing Authority stated its willingness to lead such a study. Depending on the results, Tuolumne County and the Housing Authority could challenge the HUD-imposed rent caps and increase rental subsidy limits. This will allow rental assistance clients to access a wider range of rental opportunities. Currently many rentals are above the maximum allowable FMR and are thus not eligible for use in many rental assistance programs.

Short Term Solutions:

Increase Landlord Engagement to Increase Access to Housing Units - Another key strategy for increasing access to safe, affordable housing is to continue to develop and improve partnerships with landlords and property managers, so that subsidies and loans can be used to their full effect. Some providers, such as ATCAA and the Veterans Service Organization, have spent years building up networks of private landlords who trust those providers to connect them with tenants who are both high-vulnerability and well-supported with appropriate supportive services and rental assistance. The Stanislaus County Housing Authority already has two dedicated staff members that engage and develop relationships with landlords. Additionally, ATCAA will be hiring a dedicated housing navigator in February, 2019. The CoC has developed hand-outs for landlords and CoC members make presentations to local realtor organizations.

A strong landlord engagement campaign includes identifying potential landlords through various networks, conducting outreach and education, and finally building and deepening relationships. The county will encourage the Central Sierra CoC to continue working with the Stanislaus Housing Authority and ATCAA, as well as any other relevant stakeholders, to identify landlords with available units across Tuolumne County. Ideally, partner agencies will create educational materials to dispel myths around affordable housing and renting to the target population, and begin to engage the targeted landlords. As landlords begin to participate and offer their units, partner agencies will continue to develop and sustain its relationships to ensure future participation. In addition to these efforts, the Central Sierra CoC will consider dedicating resources toward a Risk Mitigation Fund which acts as an added protection for a landlord willing to rent to someone with limited income, poor rental history, or criminal history. The funds may cover damages to a unit (beyond that which is covered by security deposit), lost rent, or legal fees. The development of a Risk Mitigation Fund will further encourage participation from landlords and help reduce the real or perceived risks associated with renting to homeless households.

Place RV's in Rental Parks – Currently, Give Someone a Chance purchases, refurbishes and gives homeless clients an RV that they place in a rental RV/Mobile home Park. The program is limited due to funding for both the units and long-term space rent assistance. This concept could be expanded, if more funding is available. RVs, tiny homes, or small mobile homes would all be appropriate for this program.

Long Term Solutions

More Affordable Housing - Tuolumne County has been working with experienced affordable housing developers to encourage them to build new or rehabilitate existing housing units to expand affordable housing. The County has encouraged these developers to set aside a portion of the units for extremely low income households and people experiencing homelessness. A portion of the units for people experiencing homelessness can be reserved for adults with serious mental illness, children with severe emotional disorders and their families, and persons who need or are at risk of needing acute psychiatric inpatient care, residential treatment, or outpatient crisis

[20] *Press Banner:* http://www.goldenstatenewspapers.com/press_banner/rent-caps-for-section-program-successfully-challenged/article_10247726-9045-11e8-b3b9-0b1d26d32b41.html

intervention. Any unit renting to an extremely low income household will require substantial development subsidies and rental assistance.

Resources Needed: Appropriate sites, grants and loans, fee waivers, staff time. Specific funding sources include No Place Like Home Program, Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP), CoC funding, Section 8 rental assistance, Affordable Housing Tax Credits, and Veterans Housing and Homeless Prevention Program (VHHP).
Lead: County Housing Division will continue to work with Visionary Home Builders, the Stanislaus County Housing Authority, and any other affordable housing developer interested in building affordable units for extremely low-income households.

Explore Additional Funding Opportunities for Rental Subsidies - While new affordable housing units will increase the stock of available housing options, it will still not be enough to meet the need of the significant number of individuals in Tuolumne County that are homeless and/or facing homelessness. As a result, the County will encourage the Stanislaus County Housing Authority to explore additional funding opportunities for rental subsidies in Tuolumne County.

Resources Needed: HUD rental assistance funds.
Lead: Stanislaus County Housing Authority.

Long Term Solutions:

Explore the Possibility of Accessory Units - The State of California has implemented code changes to make it easier and cheaper to build accessory dwelling units (ADUs) as a way to increase housing in areas that are already developed and near services. Some communities are looking for ways to utilize ADUs to address homelessness. For example, Los Angeles County received a $1 million grant in October, 2018 from Bloomberg Philanthropies U.S. Mayors Challenge Grant that will go toward a program encouraging homeowners to build accessory dwelling units in exchange for allowing a homeless resident to rent the unit for three years. The property owner will receive incentives valued between $10,000 and $30,000. The tenant will receive rental assistance and case management.

LACK OF HOMELESS SHELTER

Additional shelter options needed include the following:

- Low barrier shelter for single individuals,
- Beds that allow longer stays and allow pets,
- Options for unaccompanied minors, and
- Housing-focused case management.

Short Term Solutions:

Low Barrier Shelter – Emergency shelter should support flow from housing crisis to housing stability, in which the aim of the system is to produce the most rapid and effective permanent housing connections for individuals and families facing crisis. A low barrier shelter model will respond to the needs of unsheltered individuals by creating safe arrangements for pets, and providing safe storage for belongings.

In early 2018, the City of Sonora convened a group of government officials and service providers and investigated opportunities for building an additional shelter.[21] Carrying the momentum forward from these previous efforts, a similar group of stakeholders could focus on identifying an existing facility where a potential shelter will be located. Community partners could actively engage nonprofit and faith-based providers to solicit interest in operation and management of the low barrier shelter as well as fundraising efforts. Shelter options could include a dormitory-style shelter, rotating church shelters, tiny homes/Tough Sheds, an RV/Camping parking lot, or a winter shelter operated temporarily in the winter months.

It is also proposed that a "Multi-Agency Task Force on Homelessness" be organized for coordination of efforts on behalf of the homeless in Tuolumne County.

Beds that allow pets/allow longer stays – Some homeless families and other homeless persons will not go into a shelter without their pets and currently the family shelters do not allow pets. Shelters also limit stays, generally 30-60 days, and some clients are not able to find housing within this time frame. Shelter alternatives or modification of existing programs may help more families in need of emergency shelter.

County staff, as members of the Central Sierra CoC, will request that CoC members discuss this issue at their meetings and brainstorm on solutions for all of the shelters in the CoC service area. It may be possible for existing shelters to examine current policies to determine whether or not they can make changes that will expand the range of clients who will seek services at their shelter. The CoC can also look for alternatives for clients who are resistant to services through outreach and engagement efforts (see Outreach and Engagement Section).

Housing-focused case management - Case managers should be trained in housing-focused case management emphasizing housing stability before establishing other goals. Housing-based case management will be essential in supporting individual's positive shelter exits, which in turn, increases shelter bed availability. County staff, as participants in the CoC, will encourage the CoC to offer training, as funding becomes available.

LACK OF FUNDING/FUNDING RESTRICTIONS

In order to implement these solutions, more funding is needed. Programs that can reduce homelessness are expensive. These solutions can include affordable housing acquisition and development, shelter acquisition, shelter operation, rental assistance, volunteer coordination, services, job training opportunities, and funds to pay for staff to implement this plan. Of the new funding becoming available for housing for people experiencing homelessness, much of it is limited to helping people who also have a serious mental illness. Funding for homeless who do not fall into this category is also needed. Governor Gavin Newson has proposed additional funding to address general homelessness in California.

Short Term Solutions:

Grant Writer – A grant writer could be hired to seek additional funding for homelessness programs.

Establish a Community Homeless Program Fund- Many people report that they would like to make donations to help solve homelessness. Others would like an alternative to giving "hand-outs" to homeless individuals. There could also be a funding campaign where individuals can

[21] *The Union Democrat, Jan. 2018:* https://www.uniondemocrat.com/home/5945541-151/interest-grows-for-low-barrier-shelter

make small donations at local stores and businesses. The fundraising campaign would also raise awareness about homelessness.

Long Term Solutions:

Explore generating local funding – Some communities have passed local bond measures, dedicated a small portion of local property taxes or transient occupancy tax or other local funds to affordable housing or homelessness programs. Funding for homelessness programs should consider whether or not some type of local fee/tax is feasible in our community.

Nonprofit or Faith Based Community Venture – Develop Income-generating business to fund homeless programs – Another possible option for funding would be a nonprofit or faith based community/church business venture that could help fund homelessness programs. For example, in Bergen County, New Jersey, a nonprofit operates a homeless shelter that is a mobile home park, owned by the organization that has tiny homes. A few homes are rented out as Air BnB's as an income stream for the organization.

LACK OF AGENCIES/SERVICES DEDICATED TO PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

An effective crisis response system is able to identify and quickly connect people who are experiencing or are at risk of experiencing homelessness to housing assistance and other services. It works because it aligns a community and its programs and services around one common goal — to make homelessness rare, brief, and nonrecurring.

The community survey suggests that there is strong public support for strengthening the crisis response system to alleviate some of the more short-term effects of homelessness. For example, the top two concerns raised in the community survey were community health/safety (18% of respondents, question 6) and trash/waste around homeless camps (12% of respondents, question 6).

Short Term Solutions:

Improved Resource Guide - The County and various local nonprofits have lists of resources for people who are homeless or in danger of becoming homeless. A comprehensive list of services and resources, including eligibility requirements and locations of access points could be compiled. This comprehensive list will act as a guide for service providers and community members alike, to assist those experiencing homelessness. The guide will be available online with dedicated staff ensuring it is updated as services and resources change.

The resource information can be provided in a variety of formats, including a quick resource guide for ease of review in crisis scenarios.

Outreach Worker - In response to the number of unsheltered homeless in Tuolumne, explore funding an outreach position who will work with first responders such as the Sonora Police Department, County Sheriff's Office, Fire personnel, Me Wuk Tribal Security, etc., and social service/behavioral health/health organization to engage in street outreach to identify and engage homeless individuals and families and connect them to services and housing. Effective street outreach teams are fully mobile, highly-trained, and skilled in case management. While most of the current services available for homelessness and at-risk households are centralized in Sonora, the teams will expand access by covering the full geographic area of Tuolumne County alleviating some of the noted transportation challenges by meeting people where they are. The outreach worker can also work with people who live in camps to educate them about fire safety.

Case Worker Training - It is important to train existing case workers in successful outreach and engagement techniques so that people experiencing homelessness, especially the chronically homeless, will access services that will allow them to become and stay sheltered.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Explore Employment Models for People Experiencing Homelessness, Job Readiness/Training – Because people experiencing homelessness form a diverse group, a variety of evidence-based and promising approaches have emerged to assist transitions into employment for different subpopulations. Exploring different employment models for people experiencing homelessness will give them the "hand up" they need they need to seek work, return to work, for the purpose of becoming independent and self-sustaining.

These services, often created through partnerships with private industry, foundations, and nonprofit organizations, round out the continuum of care that leads to recovery and independence for those who are homeless. Consider establishing a collaboration with Mother Lode Job Training, HSA Agency Representatives, Chamber of Commerce, local employers, and non-profits to develop a local model for employment, and seek grant funds to establish a job readiness and training program with hands-on experience.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation assistance to homeless persons is a basic but necessary step for service access. The lack of public transportation, individual transportation, and program funds for transportation, and the burden of travel time make it more difficult for homeless to access services. There are inadequate transportation options in Tuolumne County; limited bus service, only one taxi service provider.

Short Term Solutions:

Leverage Existing Agency and/or Providers Regarding Transportation and Possible Solutions - Conduct brainstorming session/s with providers about possible solutions to transportation issues including providing transportation and nonprofits coordinating services so that more services are co-located, making it easier for people without transportation to access services.

Long Term Solutions:

Advocate for Funding for Small Non-Profit Transportation Groups to Provide Services - Advocate for Small Business Loan(s) for local individuals willing to start up transportation services in the community (Such as Nexstep Transportation), providing door to door transportation services. In addition, seek grant funds for the purpose of awarding funds to other transportation providers to offer services beyond their current target population, such as the Catholic Charities Transportation Program, Veterans Administration, and Wheels (Groveland).

LACK OF COORDINATION AND INFORMATION SHARING AMONG SERVICE PROVIDERS

An effective community organizing structure is necessary to coordinate the community's response to homelessness, to have "oversight" for recommended solutions and tasks as part of the Tuolumne County Plan to Combat Homelessness.

Coordination also exists when staff from different agencies work together on a case-by-case basis and may even do cross-training to appreciate each other's roles and responsibilities.

Coordination may also be services integration. Multi-agency teams that help get appropriate services to specific individuals are examples of coordination, as are multi-service centers where a homeless person can connect with many different agencies but there is no overall case coordination[22].

Coordinate Homelessness Efforts in Tuolumne County – Work to create an effective community organizing structure, such as a "County of Tuolumne Multi-Agency Task Force on Homelessness". The task force will serve as a committee to the Lead Agency for administering the Tuolumne County Plan to Combat Homelessness.

Explore Ways to Share Information Among Homeless Service Providers – Multi-Agency Task Force on Homelessness can brainstorm for solutions as to how information can be shared amongst homeless service providers, and then establish plan for implementing solutions. A plan for accessing the information about services/resources will be available to serve people experiencing homelessness, or who are at risk of homelessness.

Expand Coordinated Entry - The California Department of Housing and Community Development, under its CESH (California Emergency Solutions & Housing) Program, awarded a three-year grant in the amount of $562,512 to the Central Sierra CoC in January of 2019. Forty percent of the grant will be used by the CoC for operating support and upgrading the Coordinated Entry and HMIS systems. County staff, as members of the CoC will advocate expanding the Coordinated Entry system so that more homeless services providers participate. Expanding the HMIS process, which tracts data and client status, will also be a part of this effort. A strong coordinated entry and HMIS data management system will help agencies tract their clients as they access multiple services and provide data that will help evaluate outcomes. The CoC also plans to access State HCD consultants to provide training in coordinated entry to CoC member agencies.

Long Term Solutions:

Create "One Stop" Intake Centers – The lack of availability of transportation and broad geography of the county may be addressed by creating a homeless service "hub" which is a multi-service site. This approach can go far in removing barriers to services to homeless people. This type of "hub" utilizes a system of care approach that involves a variety of sectors, including criminal justice, child welfare, health care, behavioral health care, education, housing, and homelessness services. Local government, charitable organizations, faith communities and/or the non-profit sector may provide services in one location[23].

Hubs may also include a drop in center, financial counseling, allied health services, and more.[24]

Consider the possibility of creating a homeless service hub as a long term solution to combating homelessness. There are many creative ways to start a hub, such as that which recently opened

[22] The Four C's - https://www.huduser.gov/portal/publications/StrategiesAccessBenefitsServices.pdf
[23] https://www.homelesshub.ca/about-homelessness/topics/service-provision
[24] https://vincentcare.org.au/what-we-do/our-community-hubs/inner-melbourne-community-hub

in Philadelphia, PA, in the unused basement of a transit center. Centralizing more of the services available to homeless achieves an “economy of scale” approach through the sharing of space by multiple agencies, thereby reducing facilities costs to set up the hub.

ANNUAL REPORTING ON DATA AND PLAN PROGRESS

Progress in implementing the County Plan to Combat Homelessness shall be reviewed by the County Board of Supervisors annually along with available data on homelessness in Tuolumne County.

Currently, several organizations collect data on homelessness, For example, the CoC conducts the annual Point In Time Count, homeless youth data is collected by each school and compiled by the Superintendent of Schools. The Probation Department, County Jail, law enforcement, County Behavioral Health, County Social Services, health care agencies, and public health each collect data on homeless clients.

There will be a need in the future to collect project-specific data for permanent supportive housing projects with No Place Like Home Funds. The County intends to work with affordable housing developers to develop projects utilizing this funding and the affordable housing developer and their property management staff will be responsible for collecting data for each project.

CONCLUSION

Like most rural counties, Tuolumne County is challenged by its limited resources spread across a vast geography. Many dedicated social service organizations, churches, and public agencies provide services that are helping people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. But, we have significant gaps that must be addressed if we are to combat the complex issues related to homelessness.

This report contains suggested solutions. Some will be relatively easy to implement. Others will require significant time and resources. Based on the data and feedback from the focus groups and community survey the critical needs include:

- more shelter options including some type of low barrier shelter for single individuals,
- affordable housing for extremely low-income households,
- improved systems for identifying and working with homeless individuals so that they become and stay housed, and access services/benefits.

Making progress in each of these areas will help further strengthen the existing system, working toward comprehensively meeting the needs of those most vulnerable.

Appendix A

Housing and Urban Development Definition of Homelessness

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines homelessness for their program into four categories. The categories are:

Category 1: Literally Homeless

Individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, meaning:

(i) Has a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not meant for human habitation;

(ii) Is living in a publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or by federal, state and local government programs); or

(iii) Is exiting an institution where (s)he has resided for 90 days or less and who resided in an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately before entering that institution

Category 2: Imminent Risk of Homelessness

Individual or family who will imminently lose their primary nighttime residence, provided that:

(i) Residence will be lost within 14 days of the date of application for homeless assistance;

(ii) No subsequent residence has been identified; and (iii) the individual or family lacks the resources or support networks needed to obtain other permanent housing

Category 3: Homeless under other Federal statutes

Unaccompanied youth under 25 years of age, or families with children and youth, who do not otherwise qualify as homeless under this definition, but who:

(i) Are defined as homeless under the other listed federal statutes;

(ii) Have not had a lease, ownership interest, or occupancy agreement in permanent housing during the 60 days prior to the homeless assistance application;

(iii) Have experienced persistent instability as measured by two moves or more during in the preceding 60 days; and

(iv) Can be expected to continue in such status for an extended period of time due to special needs or barriers

Category 4: Fleeing/Attempting to Flee Domestic Violence

Any individual or family who:

(i) Is fleeing or attempting to flee their housing or the place they are staying because of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or other dangerous or life-threatening conditions related to violence that has taken place in the house or has made them afraid to return to the house, including:

- Trading sex for housing
- Trafficking
- Physical abuse
- Violence (or perceived threat of violence) because of the youth's sexual orientation;

(ii) Has no other residence; and

(iii) Lacks the resources or support networks to obtain other permanent housing.

Appendix B

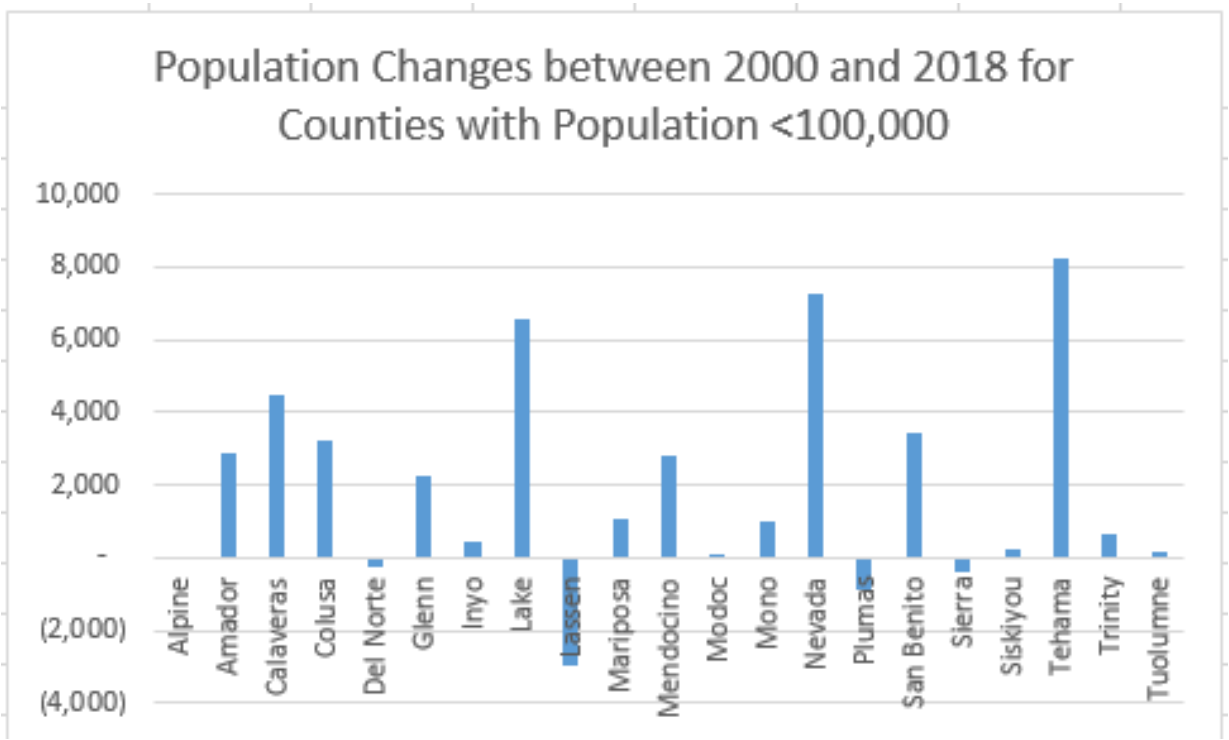
Tuolumne County Compared to California State - Percentages of Population by Age and Sex – Estimates for July 1, 2017 – US Census Quick Facts Tables

Age	Percentage of Total Population	
	Tuolumne County	State of California
Persons under 5 years	4.4%	6.3%
Persons under 18 years	16.7%	22.9%
Persons 65 years and over	25.5%	13.9%
Sex	Percentage of Total Population	
Female	48.1%	50.3%
Male	51.9%	49.7%
Race	Percentage of Total Population	
White alone	90.5%	72.4%
Black or African American alone	2.0%	6.5%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	2.3%	1.6%
Asian Alone	1.3%	15.2%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	0.3%	0.5%
Two or more races	3.6%	3.9%
Hispanic Origin	Percentage of Total Population	
Hispanic or Latino	12.5%	39.1%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	80.0%	37.2%
Population Characteristics	Percentage of Population	
Veterans, 2012-2016	10.7%	23%
Foreign born persons, 2012-2016	4.6%	27%

	% in County 2015	% in County 2017	Difference from 2015 to 2017
AGE			
Persons under 5 years		4.4%	
Persons under 18 years		16.7%	
Persons 65 years and over	24.2%	25.5%	Increased 1.3%
SEX			
Female		48.1%	
Male		51.9%	
RACE			
White alone	88.8%	90.5%	Increased 1.7%
Black or African American alone	2.0%	2.0%	No Change
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	2.3%	2.3%	No Change
Asian Alone	1.3%	1.3%	No Change
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	0.2%	0.3%	Increased .1%
Two or more races	3.5%	3.6%	Increased .1%
HISPANIC ORIGIN			
Hispanic or Latino	11.6%	12.5%	Increased .9%

White alone, not Hispanic or Latino		80.0%	
POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS			
Veterans, 2012-2016		10.7%	No Change
Foreign born persons, 2012-2016		4.6%	No Change

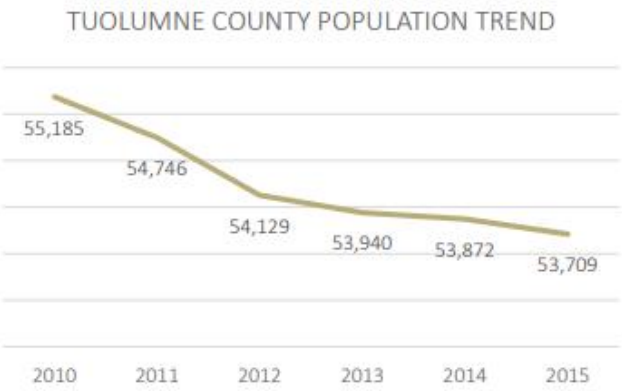
Appendix C

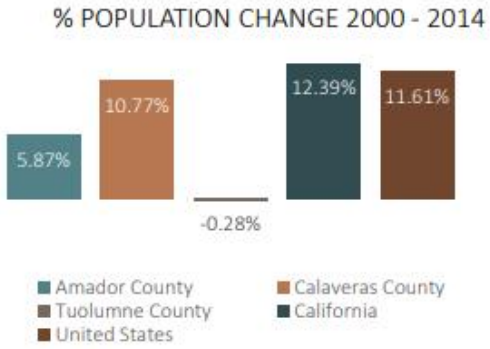

Population Changes between 2000 and 2018 for Counties with Population <100,000
10,000
8,000
6,000
4,000
2,000
-
(2,000)
(4,000)
Alpine
Amador
Calaveras
Colusa
Del Norte
Glenn
Inyo
Lake
Lassen
Mariposa
Mendocino
Modoc
Mono
Nevada
Plumas
San Benito
Sierra
Siskiyou
Tehama
Trinity
Tuolumne

Appendix D

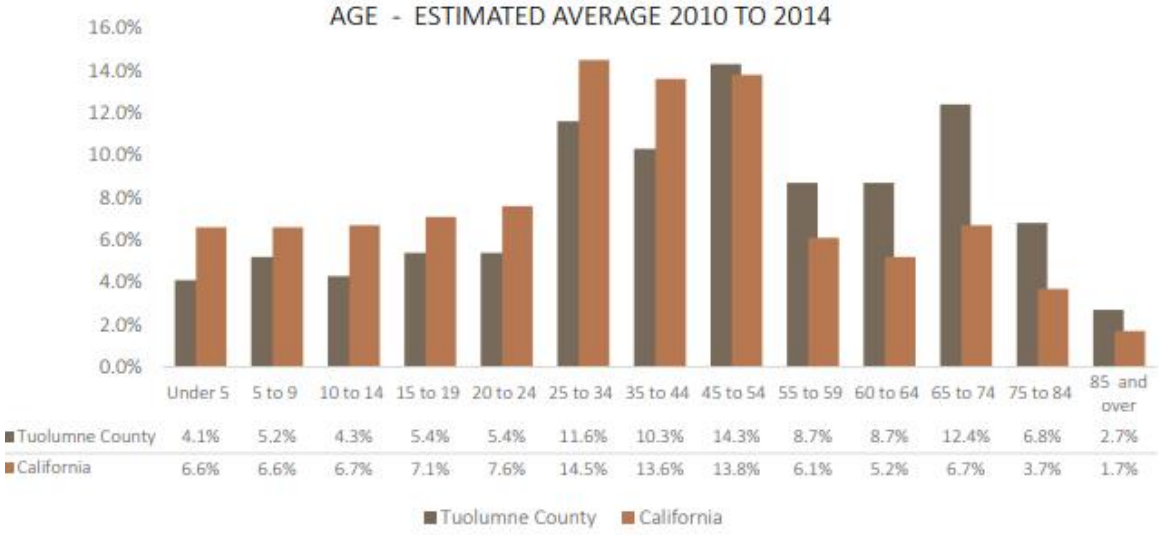
POPULATION

- In the last five years, the county's population has decreased from 55,185 to 53,709.[3]
- The prison population of approximately 4,300 inmates[4] is included in the total population number.
- From 2008 to 2013, the prison population decreased by 1,187 to 2,915 inmates. However, in the ensuing years, the inmate population regained that loss; so the decrease in county population cannot be attributed to decrease in incarcerated individuals.





- Tuolumne County's 2.8% population decrease in the last 15 years is in contrast to neighboring counties as well as the state in general.
- The county population is older than the state, with 12% of the state being over 65 years old compared to 22% of Tuolumne County being that age.[5]
- Females make up 55% of Tuolumne County residents over 64 years old.[6]



	Under 5	5 to 9	10 to 14	15 to 19	20 to 24	25 to 34	35 to 44	45 to 54	55 to 59	60 to 64	65 to 74	75 to 84	85 and over
Tuolumne County	4.1%	5.2%	4.3%	5.4%	5.4%	11.6%	10.3%	14.3%	8.7%	8.7%	12.4%	6.8%	2.7%
California	6.6%	6.6%	6.7%	7.1%	7.6%	14.5%	13.6%	13.8%	6.1%	5.2%	6.7%	3.7%	1.7%

[3] American Fact finder, US Census
[4] http://www.cdcr.ca.gov/Facilities_Locator/docs/SB601/SCC-SB601-Quarterly-Statistical-Report.pdf
[5] American Fact finder, US Census
[6] American Fact finder, US Census

Appendix E

ECONOMY

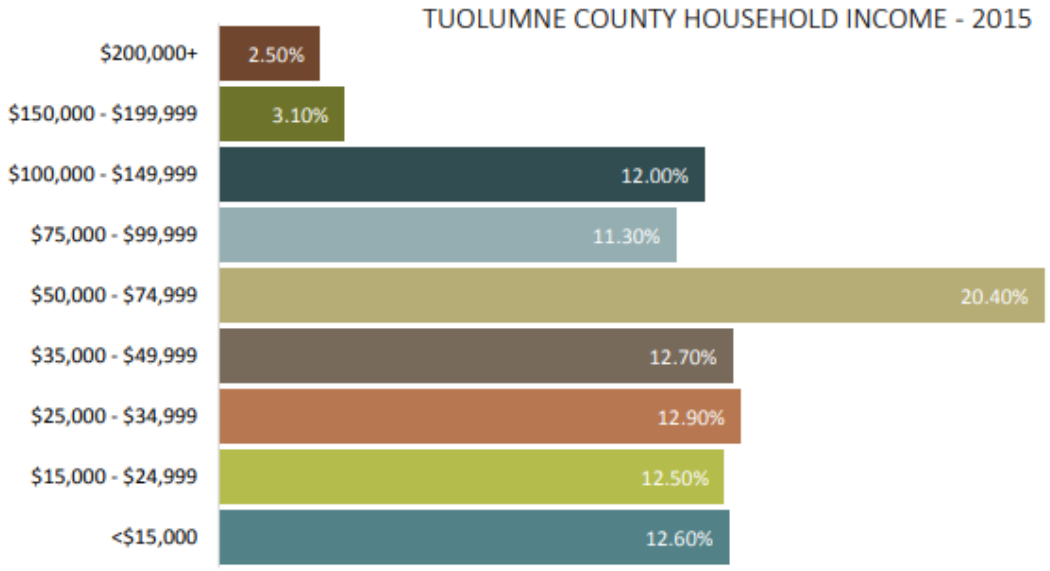
Bordered by rivers to the north and south, by the Sierra Nevada to the east and the San Joaquin valley to the west, Tuolumne County represents a portion of the southern reach of the historic Mother Lode Gold Country. With portions of Yosemite National Park in the southern sectors, tourism drives a significant percentage of the local economy.

- The government is the major employer in Tuolumne County, followed by health and social assistance, and retail trade.

- In July, 2016, the labor force included 22,270 residents, of which 20,820 were employed.[1]
- Half of the population has a household income of less than $50,000; the California median income (2010 to 2014) was $64,189.[2]

TUOLUMNE COUNTY INCOME 2015	
Median Household Income	$54,655
Average Household Income	$70,833
Per Capita Income	$29,622

Source: California Employment Development Department

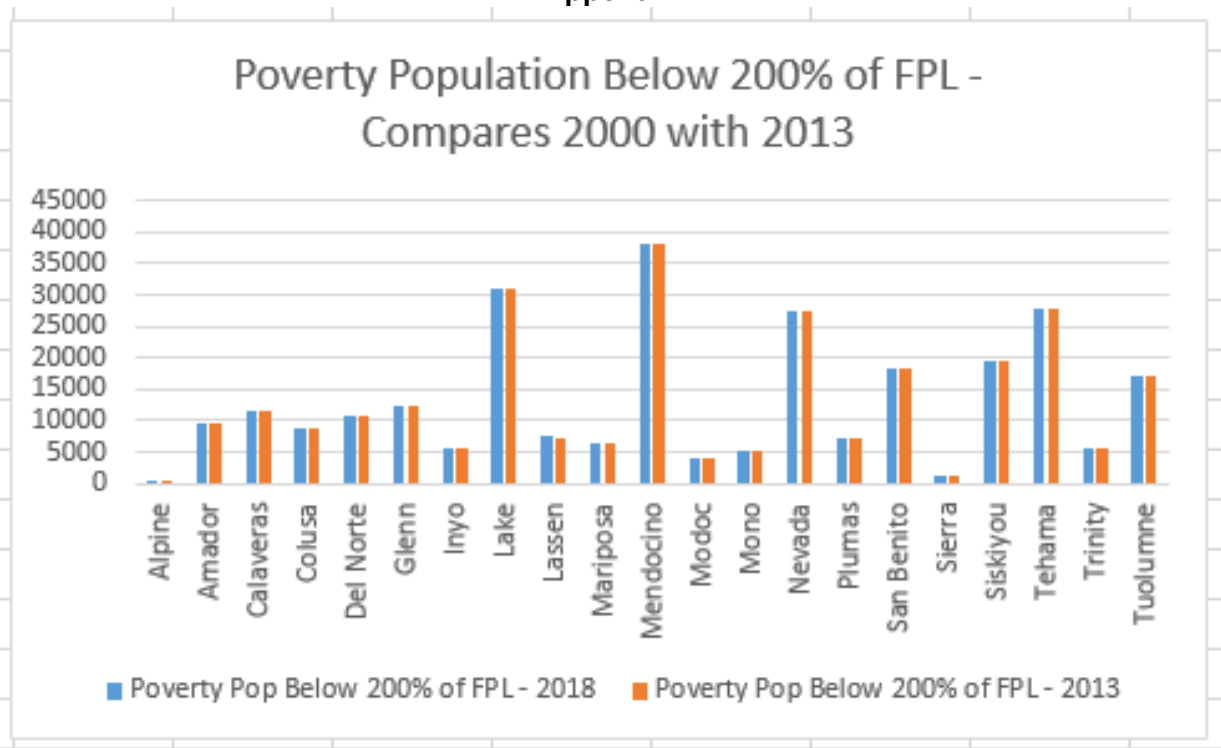


Source: California Employment Development Department

[1] California Employment Development Department

[2] US Census Bureau, American Community Survey. 2010-14. Source geography: County

Appendix F


Poverty Population Below 200% of FPL - Compares 2000 with 2013
45000
40000
35000
30000
25000
20000
15000
10000
5000
0
Alpine
Amador
Calaveras
Colusa
Del Norte
Glenn
Inyo
Lake
Lassen
Mariposa
Mendocino
Modoc
Mono
Nevada
Plumas
San Benito
Sierra
Siskiyou
Tehama
Trinity
Tuolumne
Poverty Pop Below 200% of FPL - 2018
Poverty Pop Below 200% of FPL - 2013

Appendix G

POVERTY

BACKGROUND

- The poverty rate for all persons living in the foothill area is less than the national average of 15.59 percent.
- The poverty rate for children living in the foothill area is less than the national average of 21.9 percent.
- An average of 13.35 percent of all persons lived in a state of poverty during the 2010 - 2014 period.
- An average of 10.2% of seniors in the state were living in poverty.

DATA

5-YEAR POVERTY ESTIMATES 2010 - 2014

	Total Population	Population in Poverty	Poverty Rate
Amador County	32,932	4,277	12.99%
Calaveras County	44,223	5,352	12.10%
Tuolumne County	50,714	7,444	14.68%
California	37,323,128	6,115,244	16.38%
United States	306,226,400	47,755,608	15.59%

Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey. 2010-14. Source geography: Tract

5-YEAR POVERTY ESTIMATES FOR CHILDREN 2010 - 2014

	Total Population	In Poverty	Poverty Rate
Amador County	5,645	1,230	21.80%
Calaveras County	8,052	953	11.80%
Tuolumne County	9,011	1,596	17.70%
California	9,072,050	2,059,262	22.70%
United States	72,637,888	15,907,395	21.90%

Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey. 2010-14. Source geography: County

5-YEAR POVERTY ESTIMATES FOR SENIORS 2010 - 2014

	Total Population	In Poverty	Poverty Rate
Amador County	8,265	513	6.20%
Calaveras County	10,381	737	7.10%
Tuolumne County	11,681	782	6.70%
California	4,521,042	463,096	10.20%
United States	41,871,248	3,926,219	9.40%

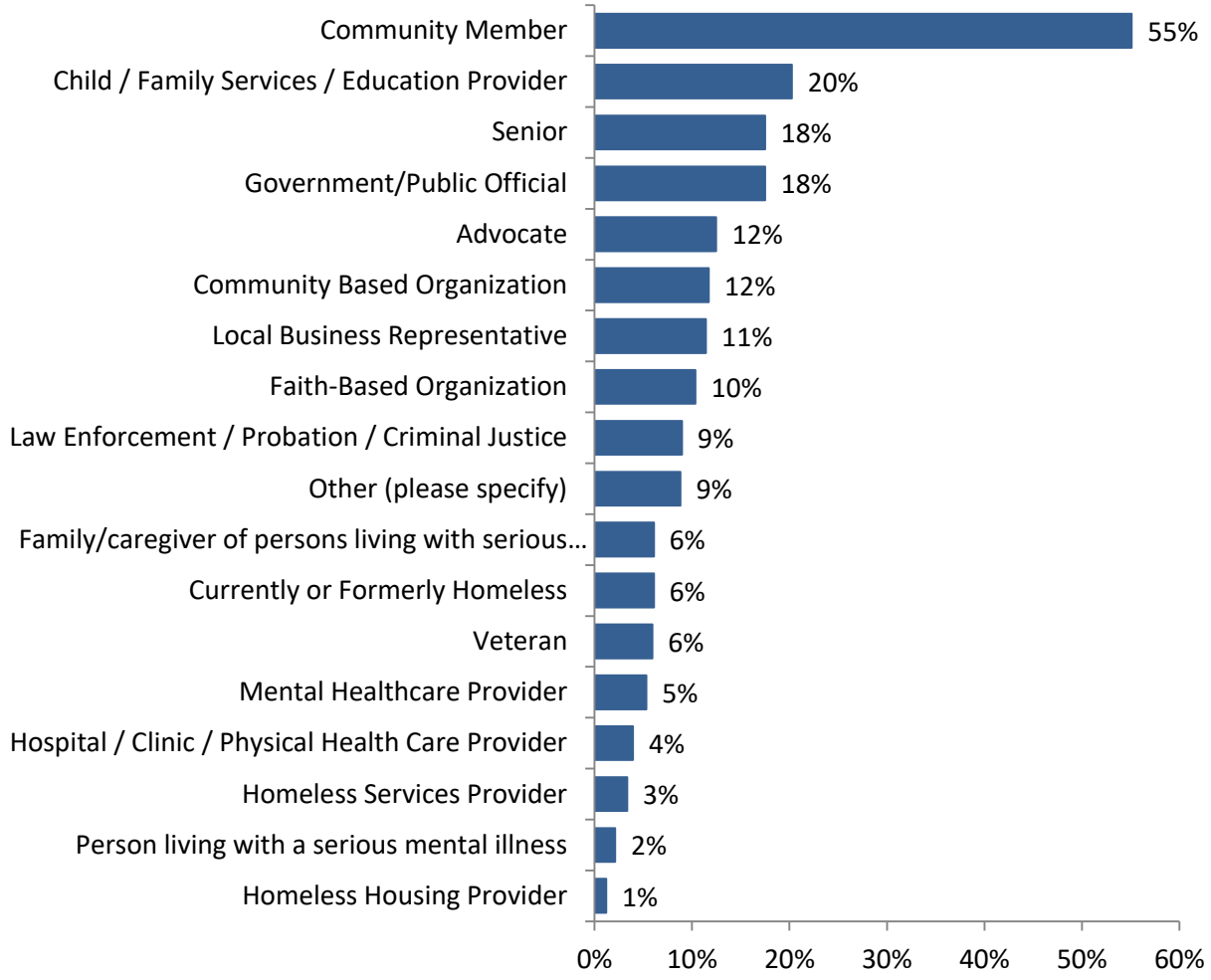
Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey. 2010-14. Source geography: county

Appendix H

Less than 100,000	As of 1/1/2018	As of 1/1/2000	Difference in Population (Increase or Decrease)	Poverty Pop Below 200% of FPL - 2018	Poverty Pop Below 200% of FPL - 2013	Difference in Poverty Populatio n	Updated Prevalence % in 2018
Alpine	1,154	1,203	(49)	400	401	-1	0.0033%
Amador	38,094	35,205	2,889	9421	9492	-71	0.0717%
Calaveras	45,157	40,658	4,499	11424	11429	-5	0.0033%
Colusa	22,098	18,880	3,218	8785	8766	19	0.0726%
Del Norte	27,221	27,447	(226)	10,899	10835	64	0.0840%
Glenn	28,796	26,555	2,241	12,413	12,385	28	0.0976%
Inyo	18,577	18,116	461	5769	5776	-7	0.0470%
Lake	65,081	58,479	6,602	31106	30943	163	0.2130%
Lassen	30,911	33,871	(2,960)	7417	7357	60	0.0664%
Mariposa	18,129	17,056	1,073	6319	6322	-3	0.0424%
Mendocino	89,299	86,506	2,793	38213	38124	89	0.2674%
Modoc	9,612	9,510	102	4029	4008	21	0.0312%
Mono	13,822	12,855	967	5281	5257	24	0.0330%
Nevada	99,155	91,872	7,283	27467	27317	150	0.1844%
Plumas	19,773	20,653	(880)	7224	7240	-16	0.0445%
San Benito	57,088	53,635	3,453	18,221	18154	67	0.1278%
Sierra	3,207	3,618	(411)	1121	1120	1	0.0071%
Siskiyou	44,612	44,382	230	19369	19388	-19	0.1383%
Tehama	64,039	55,832	8,207	27923	27884	39	0.2073%
Trinity	13,635	12,958	677	5673	5673	0	0.0432%
Tuolumne	54,740	54,587	153	17045	17040	5	0.1226%

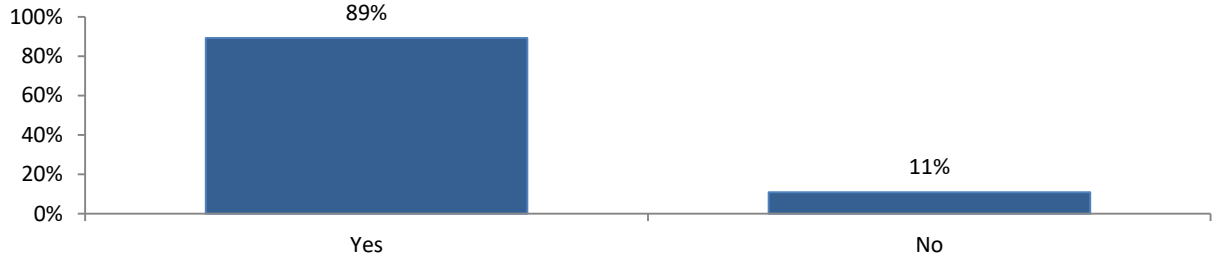
Appendix I

Community Survey Respondents
(n=657)

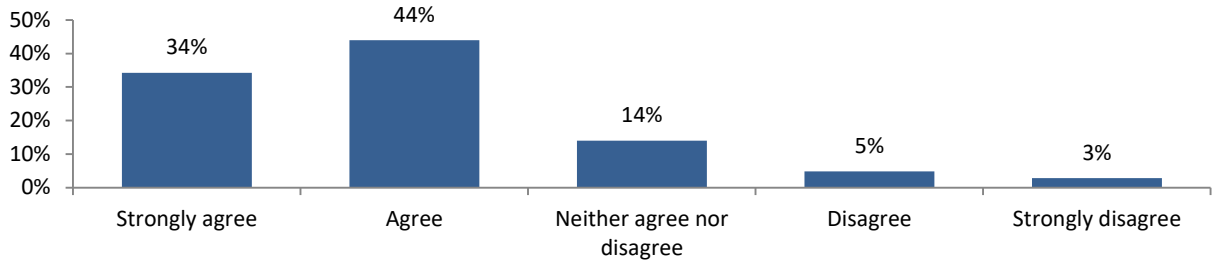


A. Community Survey Results

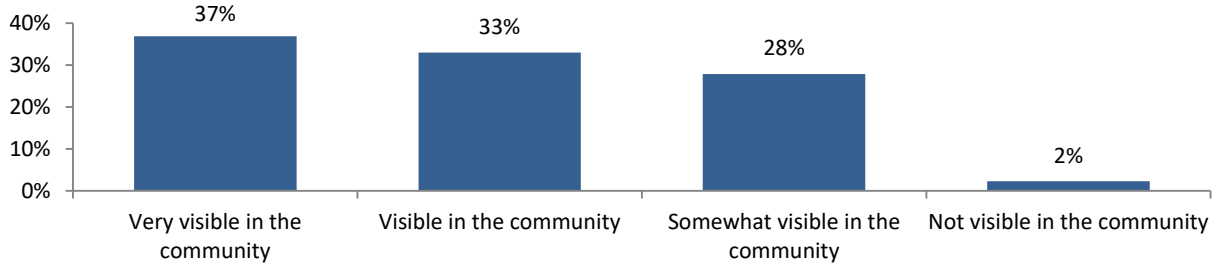
Question 2: Do you believe there is a homelessness emergency in Tuolumne County? (n=657)



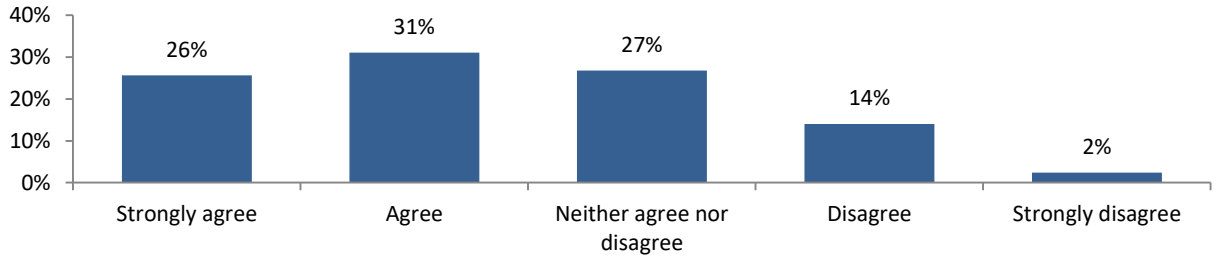
Question 3: In my opinion, homelessness in Tuolumne County has affected overall health and safety in the community. (n=534)



Question 4: In my opinion, persons experiencing homelessness in Tuolumne County are: (n=534)



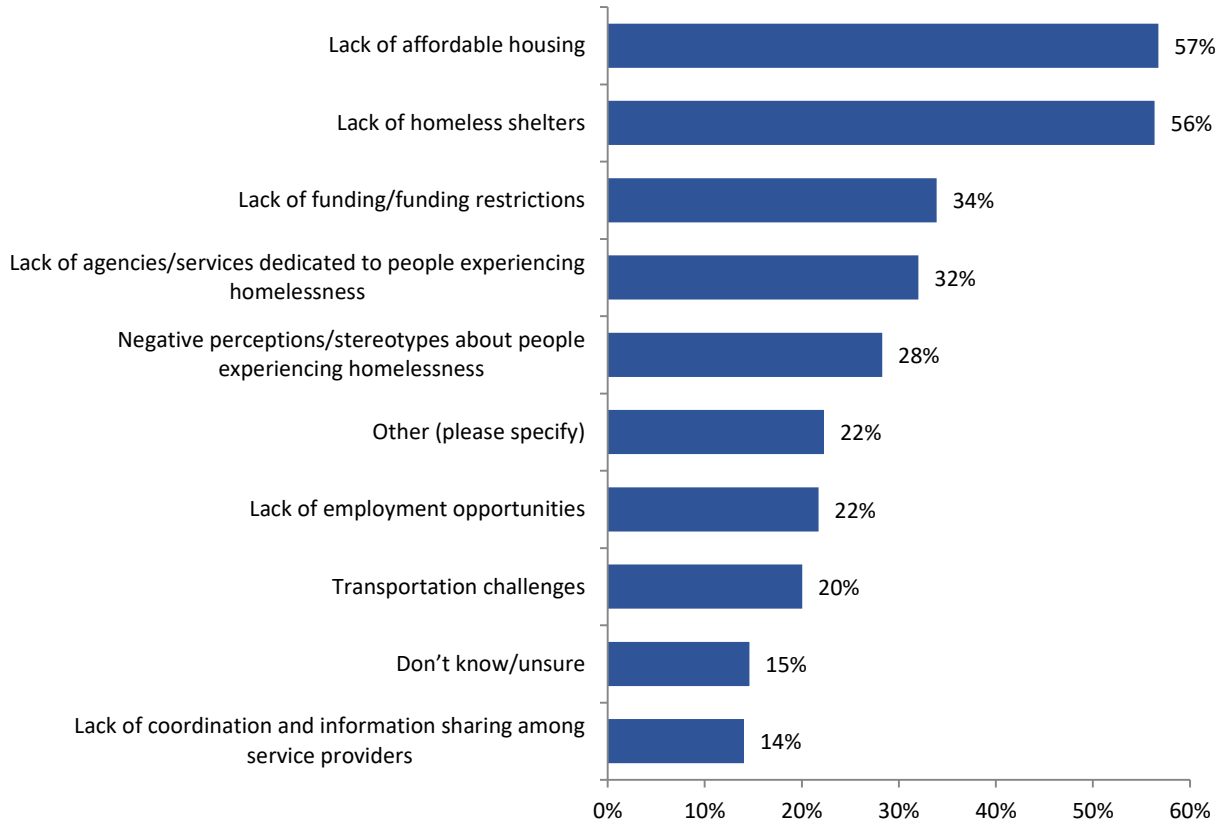
Question 5: In my opinion, homelessness in Tuolumne County has affected business/tourism. (n=534)



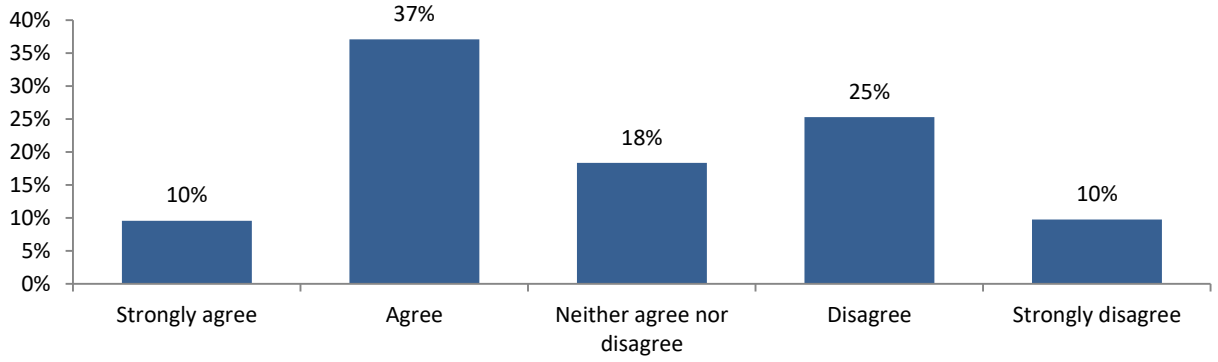
Question 6: In 2-3 sentences, please describe any specific concerns you have about homelessness in Tuolumne County. (n=469)

Open ended; see Appendix D—Open-Ended Survey Questions Results.

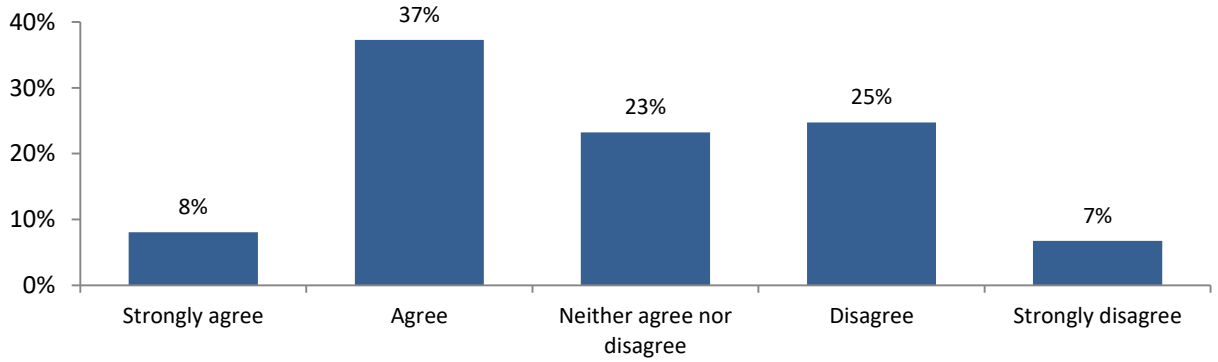
Question 7: What do you believe are top 3 barriers to addressing homelessness in Tuolumne County? (n=534)



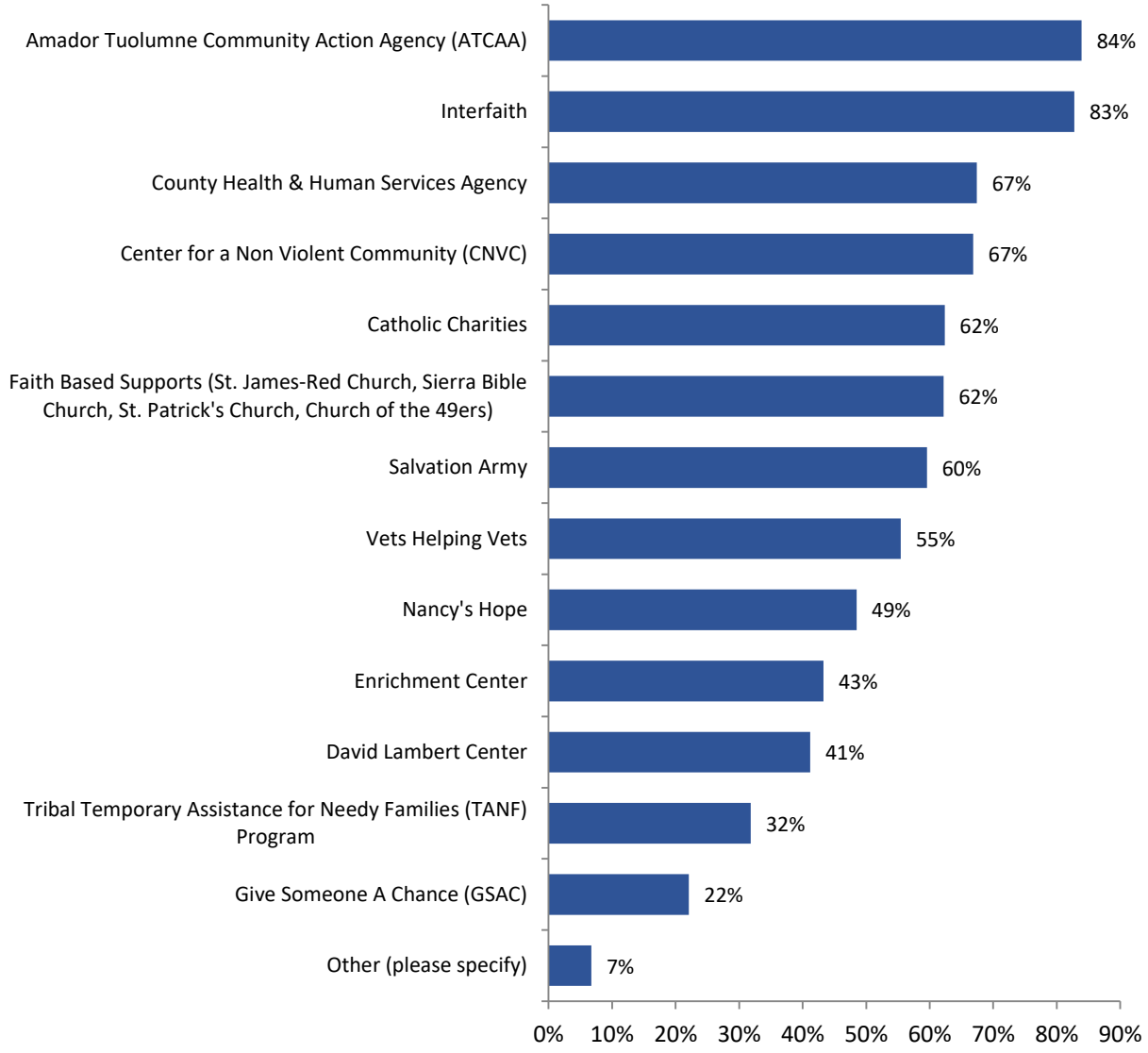
Question 8: I know where to find information about services/resources to serve persons at risk of, or experiencing homelessness. (n=534)



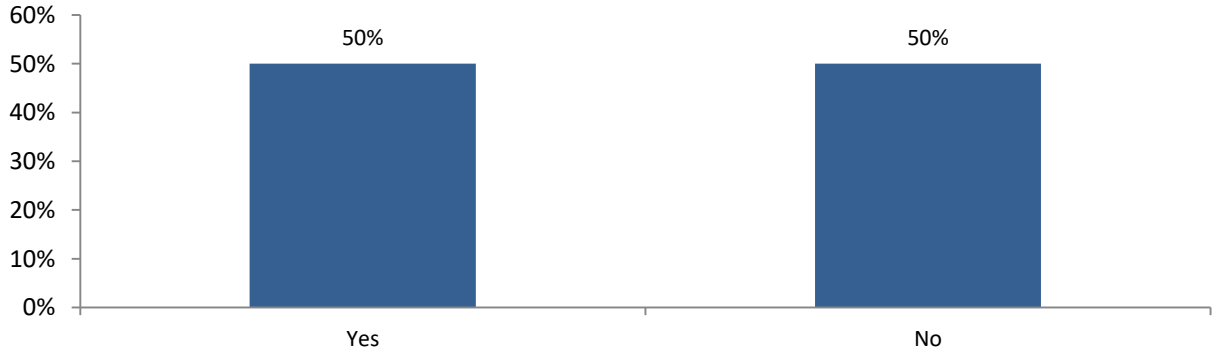
Question 9: I am familiar with local efforts to address homelessness. (n=534)



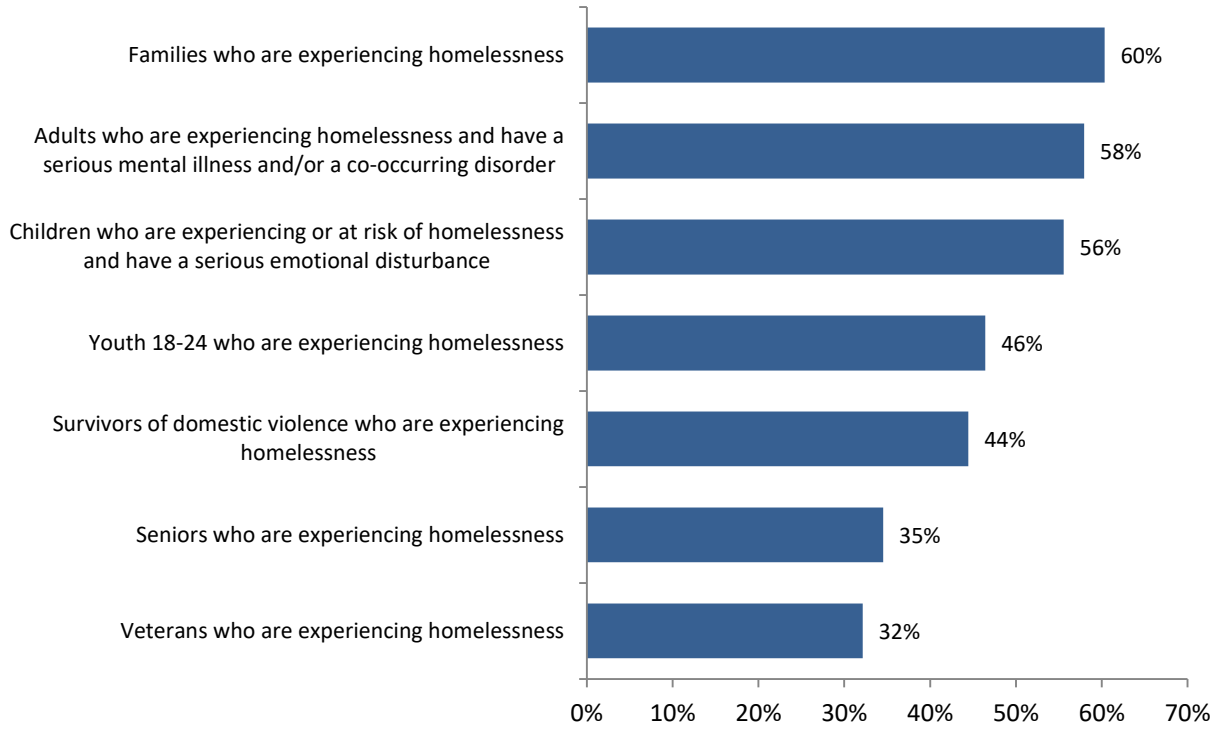
Question 10: Please check all of the organizations in Tuolumne County in which you are familiar. (n=534)



Question 11: Do you currently work with/serve people experiencing or at-risk of homelessness? (n=534)



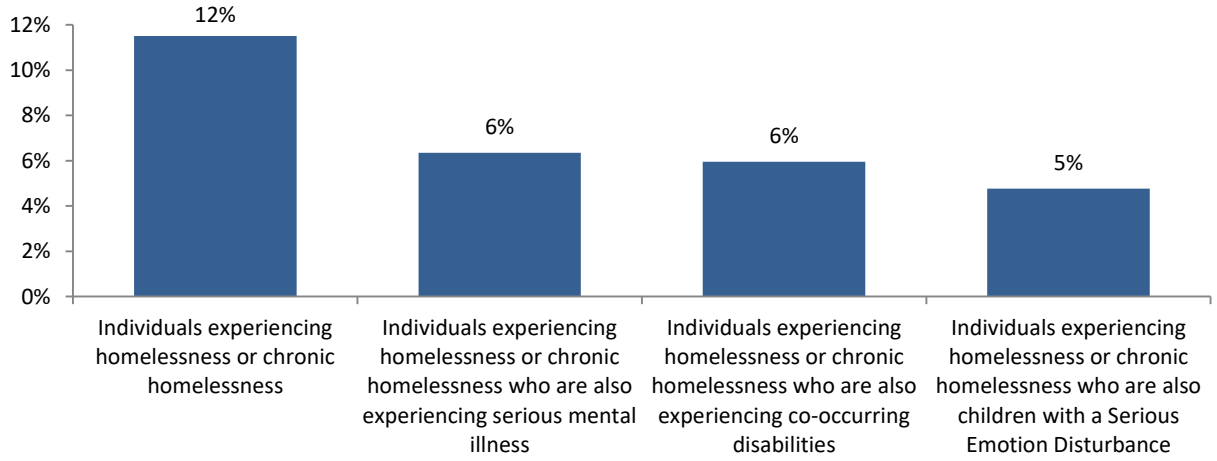
Question 12: Do you serve any of the following populations? Please check any and all that apply. (n=252)



Question 13: In 2-3 sentences, please describe any specific challenges that arise in serving the population(s) you noted in question 12. (n=214)

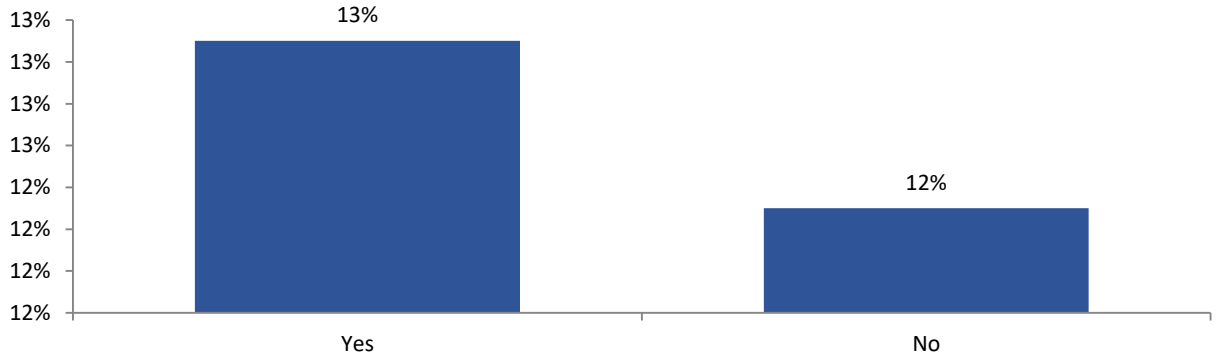
Open-ended; see Appendix IV.

Question 14: Do you currently collect data on any of the following populations? If yes, please check all of the populations on which you currently collect data: (n=252)[25]



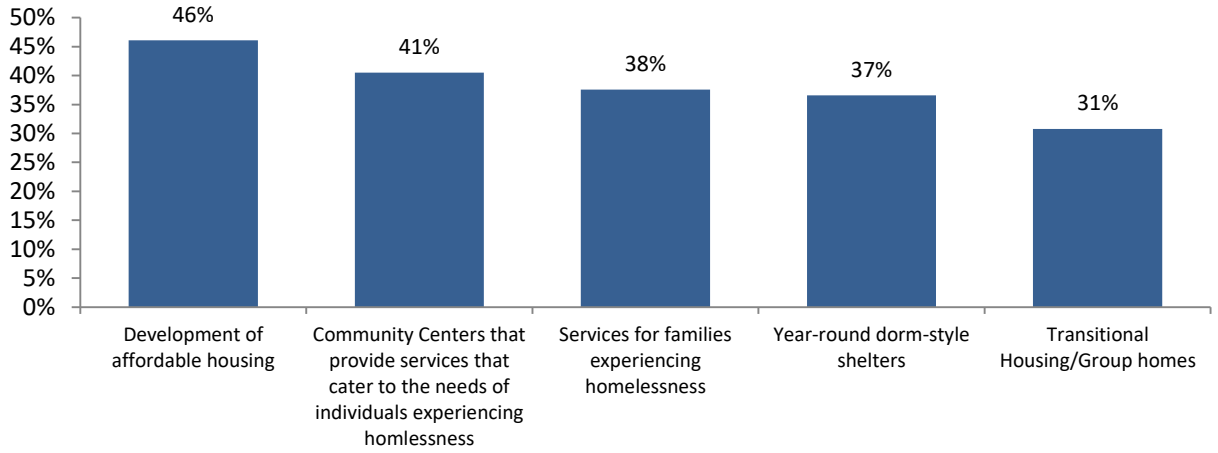
Question 15: Are you willing and able to share data with the County for the purposes of creating a strategic plan (and to the extent possible, given state and federal privacy law)? (n=252)[26]

[25] 85% of respondents answered "I do not currently collect data on clients that are experiencing homelessness."
[26] 75% of respondents answered "N/A (I do not collect data on clients that are experiencing homelessness)."



Question 16: If you answered "Yes" to question 14, please provide your contact information. (n=30).

Question 17: What are the top 3 solutions you believe would have the most impact on reducing homelessness and its effects on Tuolumne County?



Question 18: Please briefly describe any additional initiatives or efforts you are aware of that address homelessness in Tuolumne County. (n=221)

Open-ended; see Appendix D—Open-Ended Survey Questions Results.

Question 1: Please briefly describe any other concerns or ideas about homelessness in Tuolumne County that you would like to address. (n=239)

B. Open-Ended Survey Questions Results

The community survey consisted of 4 open-ended questions. These questions did not require a response, so survey respondents could choose to opt in or out of answering. To analyze the feedback, HomeBase coded each qualitative response into recurring themes/categories. This ranged from 15 unique categories in Question 18—to 17 unique categories in Question 6 and 19.

Methodology

In coding responses and creating categories, HomeBase applied the following methodology:

- HomeBase read all responses before creating recurring categories.

- After the first read-through, HomeBase began creating initial categories that were immediately apparent.
- HomeBase kept a running tally of the number of responses for each category.
- When a response did not wholly match an existing category, but was generally similar, HomeBase applied it to the existing category's tally.
- HomeBase added and subtracted categories depending on the number of tallies. For example, if a category fell significantly behind the tally count of others, it was stricken and its tallies were applied to the "Other" category. This was to ensure that only the most salient feedback was communicated.
- Conversely, if a prominent category emerged during the tallying process, it was added to the list.

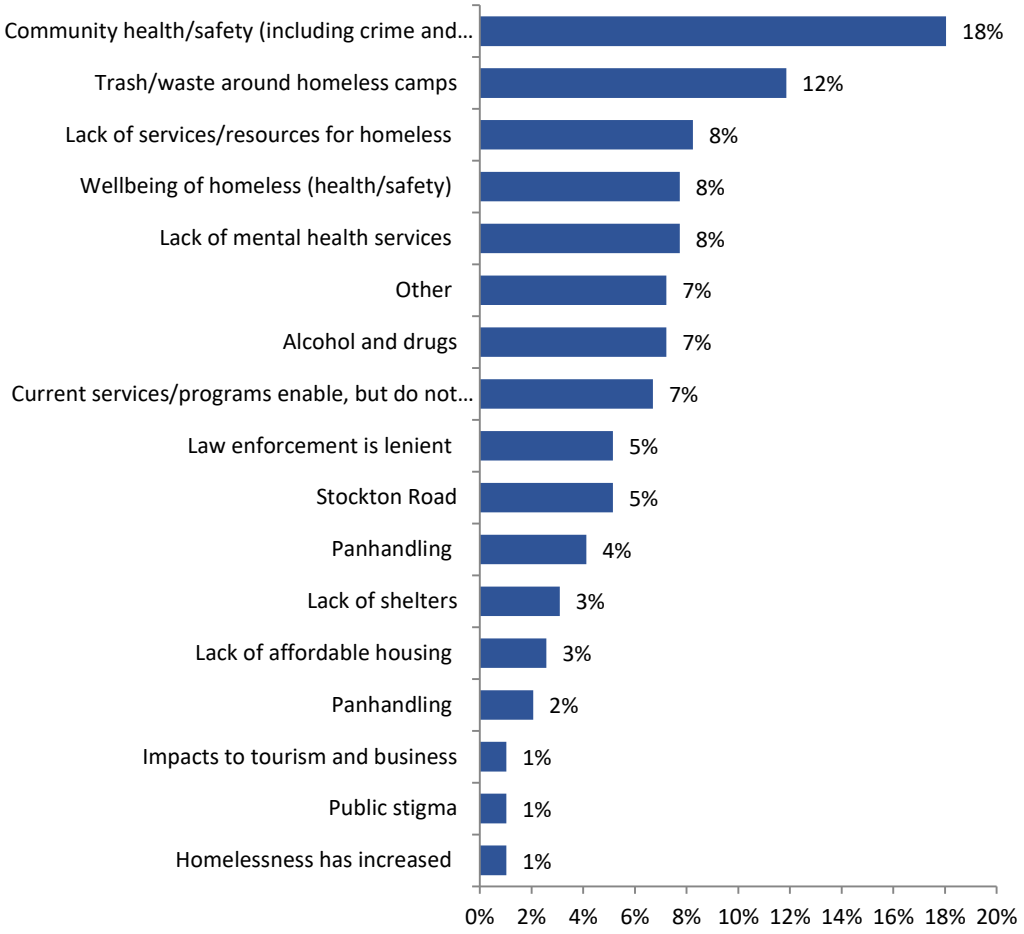
Limitations

- If a response did not closely match any category, but did not recur enough to justify a new category, HomeBase applied a tally to the "Other" category.
- In some cases, respondents wrote long responses with multiple ideas that could not be applied to one single category. When this occurred, HomeBase added a tally to each relevant category. Because of this, some responses did carry more weight than others (e.g. responses that were tallied for 2 categories versus only tallied for 1). While this methodology affected the percentages of individual categories in a minimal way, it ensured that all feedback was captured.
- Due to the nature of coding qualitative feedback, another reviewer may have (1) derived marginally different themes and/or (2) coded/tallied responses slightly differently.

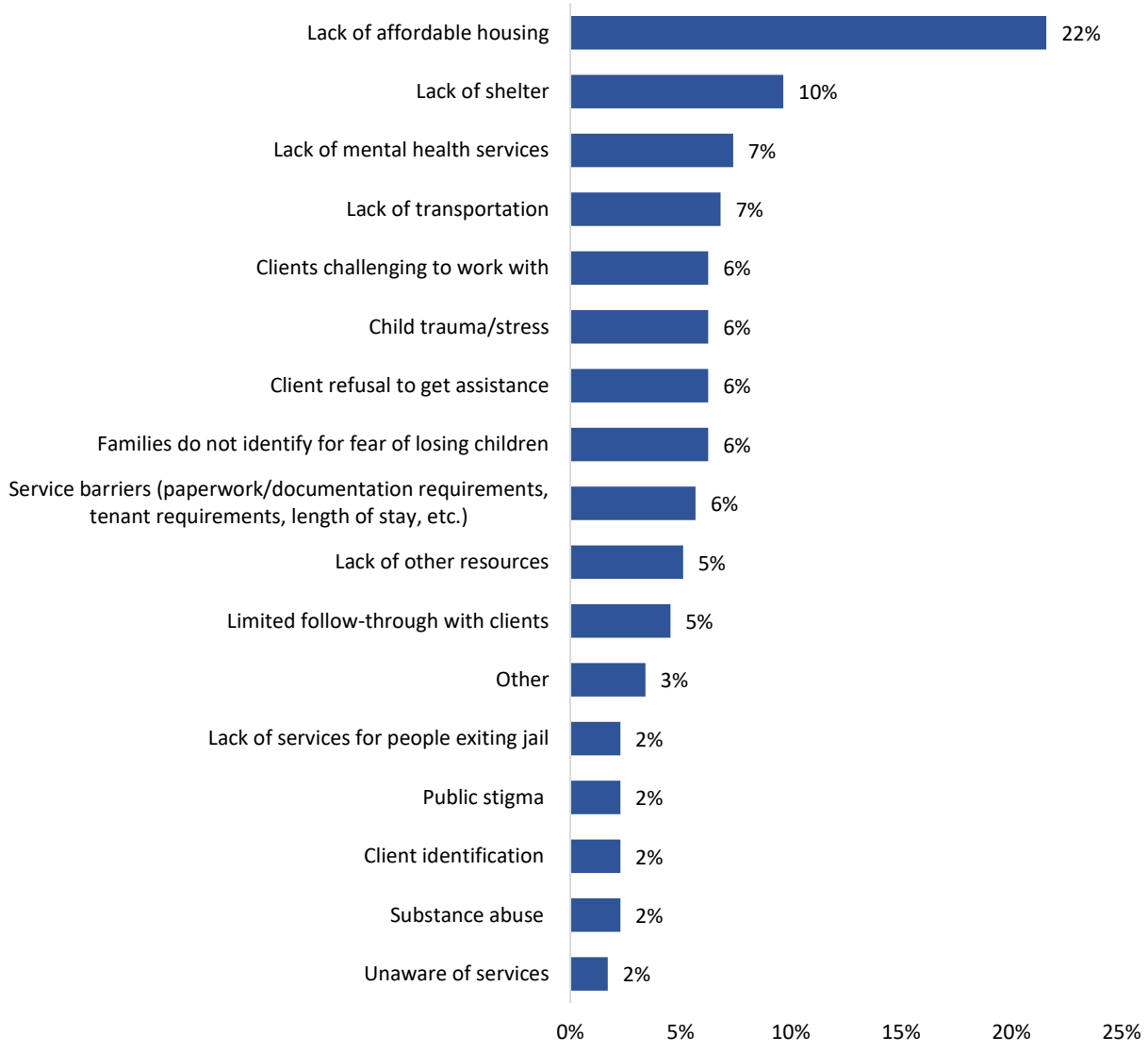
Margin of Error

- Given the limitations described above, HomeBase estimates a margin of error of +/- 1% for each category's overall percentage. For example, in Question 4, the graph shows that 18% of responses were for "community health/safety (including crime and fire)." Depending on how one coded responses, this percentage could range from 17% (-1%) to 19% (+1%).

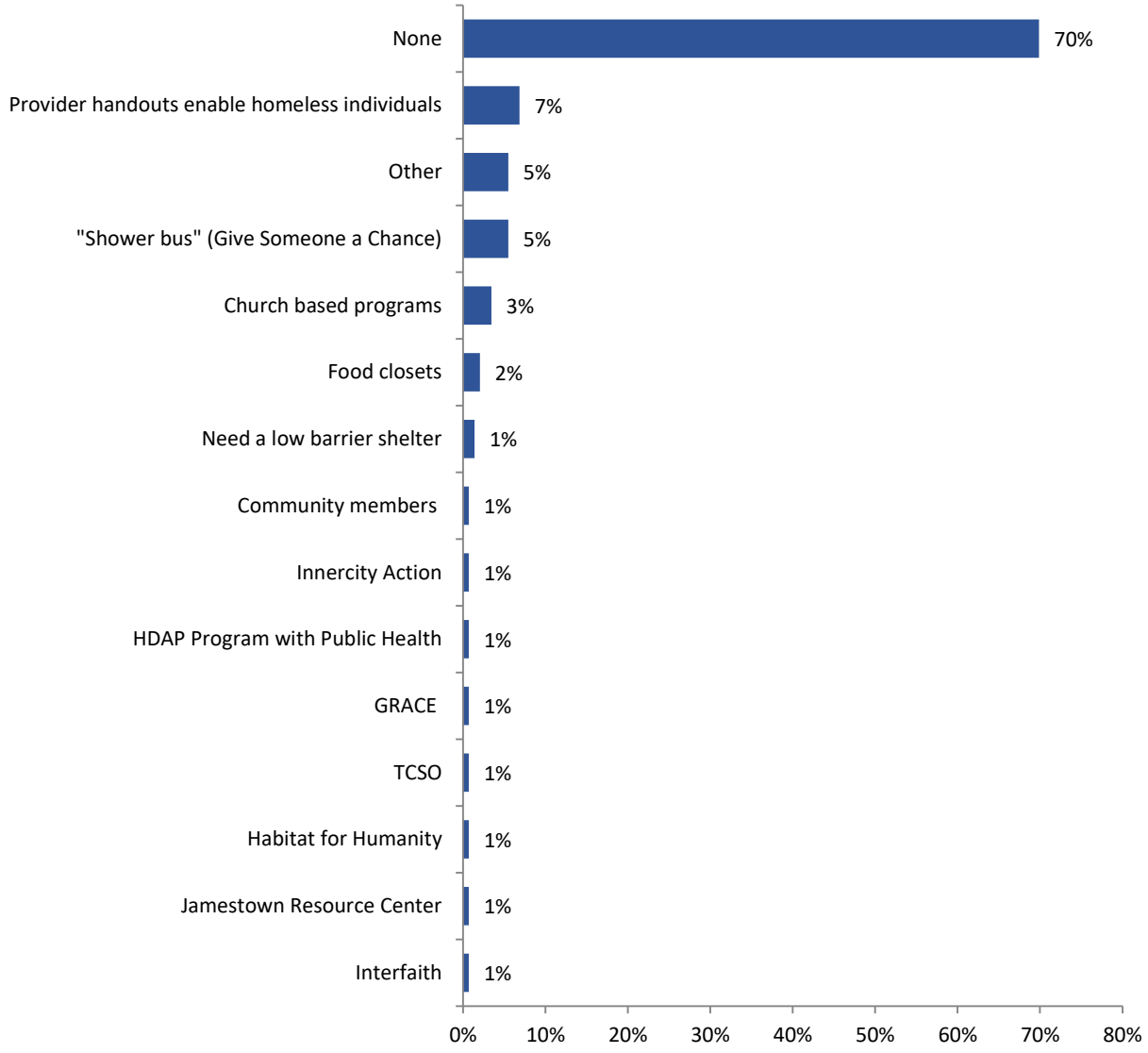
Question 6: In 2-3 sentences, please describe any specific concerns you have about homelessness in Tuolumne County. (n=469)



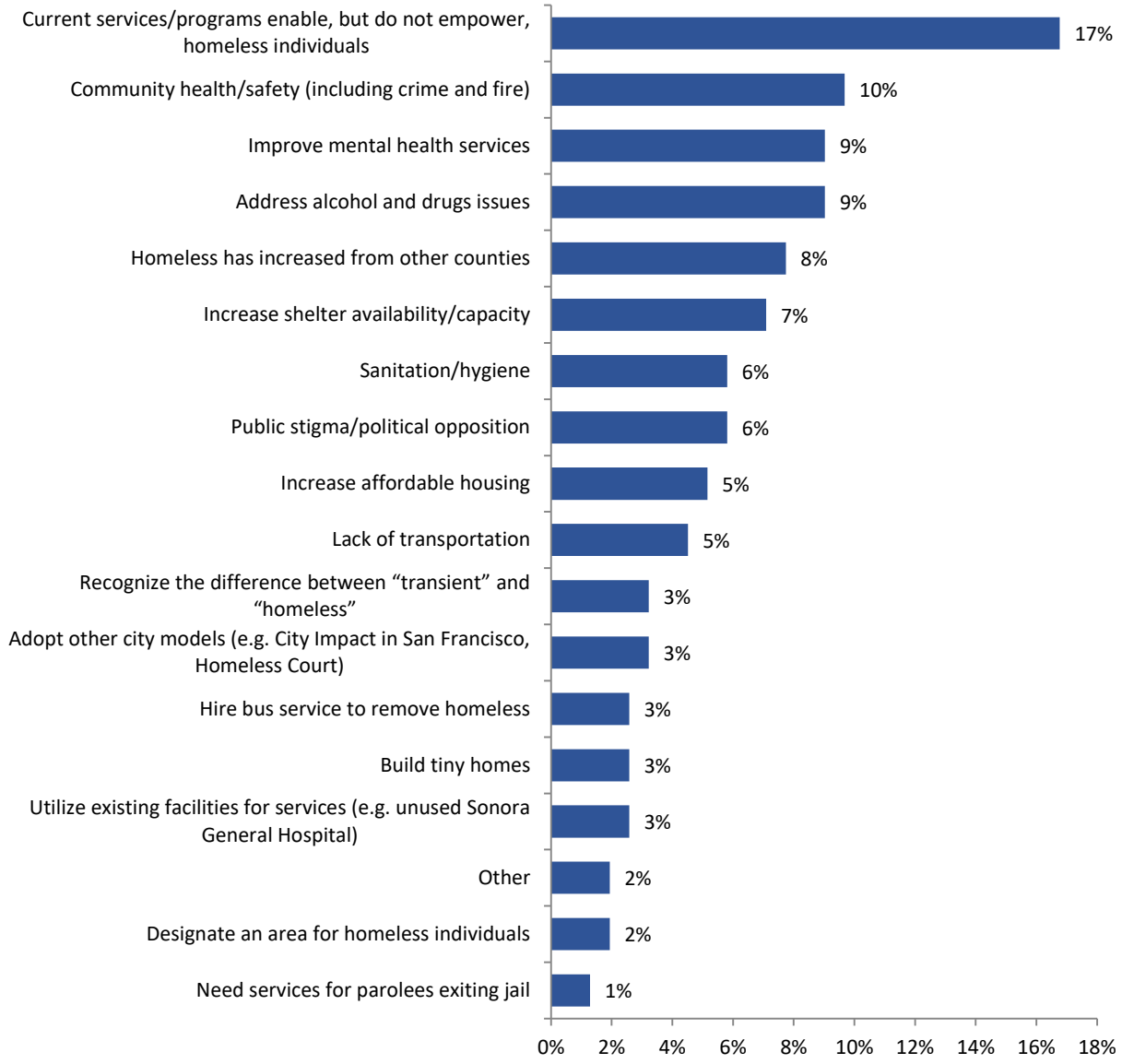
Question 13: In 2-3 sentences, please describe any specific challenges that arise in serving the population(s) you noted in question 12. (n=214)



Question 18: Please briefly describe any additional initiatives or efforts you are aware of that address homelessness in Tuolumne County. (n=221)



Question 19: Please briefly describe any other concerns or ideas about homelessness in Tuolumne County that you would like to address. (n=239)



Appendix J

List of All Participants in Stakeholder Process

The County developed the plan through a collaborative process that included community input from all of the following groups:
County Representatives with relevant expertise from:

Plan Requirement	Name	Organization	Focus Group
Behavioral Health	Tamara Oxford	Columbia College	School/Youth
	Laureen Campana	Columbia College	School/Youth
	Steve Boyack	County Behavioral Health	Healthcare
Public Health	Melissa Parish	Tuolumne County Public Health	Healthcare
Probation/Criminal Justice	Tamara McCaig	Tuolumne County Sheriff's Office	Law Enforcement
	Tina Day	TMTC Tribal Security	Law Enforcement
	Darrell Hendricks	TMTC Tribal Security	Law Enforcement
	Shane Ferreira	Highway Patrol	Law Enforcement
	Neil Evans	Tuolumne County Sheriff's Office	Law Enforcement
	Eric Hovatter	District Attorney's Office	Law Enforcement
	Annie Hockett	Tuolumne County Behavioral Health/Probation	School/Youth
	Tina Day	TMTC Tribal Security	Law Enforcement
	Linda Downey	Probation	Law Enforcement
	Turu VanderWiel	Sonora Police Department	Interview
Social Services	Macejko DeLacy	Adult, Children & Family Services	School/Youth
	Jennie Day	Tuolumne County Social Services	CBO & COC
Housing Departments	Rachelle Kellogg	City of Sonora	CBO & COC

Local Homeless Continuum of Care:

Plan Requirement	Name	Organization	Focus Group
Local Homeless Continuum of Care within the County	Anacelia C. Burton	ATCAA	CBO & COC
	Patty Aguiar	ATCAA	CBO & COC
	Kristen Youngman	ATCAA	CBO & COC
	Denise Cloward	ATCAA	CBO & COC
	Deni Avery	ATCAA	CBO & COC
	Raj Rambob	ATCAA	Interview

Housing and Homeless Service Providers (especially those with experiencing providing housing or services to those who are chronically homeless):

Plan Requirement	Name	Organization	Focus Group
Housing and Homeless Service Providers	Marcia Williams	ATCAA/Head Start	School/Youth
	Mark Dyken	Jamestown Family Center	School/Youth
	Cathie Peacock	Interfaith	CBO & COC
	Heather Carter	Center for a Nonviolent Community (CNVC)	CBO & COC
	Ali Talavera	Center for a Nonviolent Community (CNVC)	CBO & COC
	Elena Linehan	Tuolumne Me-Wuk Tribal TANF	CBO & COC
	Donita Osborne	Salvation Army	CBO & COC
	Deborah Esque	Veterans Services Office	Healthcare
	Hazel Mitchell	Give Someone A Chance	Small Providers
	Dick Mitchell	Give Someone A Chance	Small Providers
	Tom Sharpe	St. Matthew Lutheran Church	Small Providers
	Jeanette Lambert	David Lambert Drop-In Center	Small Providers
	Nathan Levering	Sierra Bible Church	Small Providers

Health Care Providers, including:

Plan Requirement	Name	Organization	Focus Group
County Health Plan	Diana Lincicum	Anthem Blue Cross	Healthcare
Community Clinics and Health Centers	Andrea Ferroni	Mathiesen Clinic	Healthcare
	Valerie Shuemake	Adventist Health	Healthcare
	Mario DeLise	Adventist Health	Healthcare
	Scott Mundy	Adventist Health	Healthcare
Other relevant providers	Alex Abarca	MACT Health Board, Inc.	Interview
	Kristin Millhoff	Area 12 Agency on Aging	Interview

Housing and Homeless Service Providers (especially those with experiencing providing housing or services to those who are chronically homeless):

Plan Requirement	Name	Organization	Focus Group
Public Housing Authorities	Barbara Kauss	Stanislaus Housing Authority	CBO & COC
	Jime Kruse	Stanislaus Housing Authority	CBO & COC

Representatives of family caregivers of persons living with a serious mental illness:

Plan Requirement	Name	Organization	Focus Group
Representatives of Family Caregivers Living with Serious Mental Illness	John Leamy	NAMI Tuolumne County	Small Providers
	Bill Seldon	NAMI Tuolumne County	Small Providers

Appendix K

Ranking of Focus Group Themes

HomeBase assessed the focus group and stakeholder interview notes to determine which conversations/themes recurred the most frequently. While HomeBase could not specifically quantify the number of times any particular theme/topic was mentioned during the focus groups, it was able to derive a general ranking of themes by identifying the major themes that recurred both within and across groups. In deriving the ranking of themes, the range in depth and complexity of focus group dialogue was considered.

From most recurrences to least, participants noted that:

1. Transportation options are limited in Tuolumne County (e.g. in south county, on weekends, when needed, etc.)

2. Shelter requirements—such as overall rules and intake processes—can be restrictive and even harsh.

3. Tuolumne County needs to expand shelter capacity, both in general and for specific populations (e.g. families/men/DV/TAY).

4. Tuolumne County needs more dedicated hubs and/or central access points for (1) clients to easily access referrals, and for (2) providers/responders to call for information.

5. Clients are frequently unaware of services, or service resistant.

6. Clients are frequently unable to meet lease-up requirements for housing—due to credit rating, documentation requirements, etc.

7. Tuolumne County needs more housing, given there are currently few units that are affordable within fair market rent.

8. Clients frequently experience challenges when attempting to make appointments, such as extensive wait times and limited transportation.

9. There is limited coordination between counties, between cities, and between counties and cities.

10. Tuolumne County's geography is expansive and services are concentrated in Sonora.

11. Most landlords are reluctant to accept vouchers and HUD VASH.

12. It is challenging to identify clients in need, especially since many do not self-identify (e.g. youth).

13. Some providers/stakeholders are unaware of existing services.

14. Tuolumne County has limited outreach programs, especially given the challenge in locating and tracking encampments.

15. Tuolumne County has limited mental health/rehab services.

16. It is challenging to follow through with clients, especially after (1) a referral is made and/or (2) a client leaves the county.

17. There are limited formal systems in place for referrals between providers.

18. Public support for significant intervention is negligible due to stigma against those who are homeless and/or suffering from mental illness.

19. Short-term rentals (AirBnB/VRBO) have significantly reduced housing stock.

20. Clients and providers have experienced past challenges in working with county Behavioral Health (e.g. Behavioral Health has been hard to contact, reluctant to share information).

Less common themes:

- Some agencies are involved in landlord engagement, including the Stanislaus Housing Authority and ATCAA).

- There is limited support for recently released parolees.

- Shelters are short-term and do not give clients enough time to make needed life changes.

- Clients stay in affordable housing even after income/circumstances improve, which prohibits another client from taking their spot.

- Shared housing options are encouraged and desired.

- Families are afraid to identify as homeless, for fear that it will result in separation from their children.

Appendix L

Focus Group Questions

Partners & Resources in Ending Homelessness (20 min)

1. What are some of the supportive services/resources available in Tuolumne County to assist those experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness? Where and how are they accessed?

    a. Tell us about any specific resources for youth, adults, veterans, or families, at risk, or experiencing homelessness.

2. Who are the partners involved in ending homelessness in Tuolumne County?
    a. Tell us about any housing and homeless service providers, health plans, community clinics, task forces or working groups committed to ending homelessness.
    b. Are there stakeholders or partners missing, that you would like to see engaged?
    c. Who do you think should be leading this effort?

Service and Outreach Challenges (20 min)

3. What are some of the challenges you face when interacting with individuals experiencing homelessness? If applicable please specify challenges as they relate to youth, vets, individuals, and families. In regard to:
    a) Transportation
    b) Housing and services
    c) Mental health
    d) Physical health
    e) Addiction
    f) Employment
    g) Coordination among agencies
    h) Data collection and capacity
    i) Coordinated Entry
    j) Referral process
    k) Outreach
    l) Other

4. The criminalization of homelessness refers to measures that prohibit activities such as sleeping/camping, loitering or panhandling, and storing personal belongings in public spaces. These ordinances include criminal penalties for violations of these acts. Are you aware of any efforts being made to reduce the criminalization of homelessness in Tuolumne County?
    a. If so, please tell us about any resources, trainings, or initiatives (e.g. outreach teams partnered with police, alternative court programs, etc).

Description/Data Collection (10 min)

5. What kind of data collection happens at your agency/program? (e.g. do you track who attends meal service, who utilizes shelter or other facilities– showers, laundry, etc.)

6. How do you collect data about a client's housing status? For emergency responders, do you screen for homelessness?
    a. What data system or method do you use? (e.g. HMIS, spreadsheet)
    b. What specifically do you track (e.g. street homelessness, at risk, doubled up)?
    c. Do you share the data with other service providers or organizations?

7. How do you collect a client's demographic data? (e.g. youth, adults, veterans, or families)
    a. What data system or method do you use? (e.g. HMIS, spreadsheet)

b. Do you share the data with other service providers or organizations?

8. How are you collecting data about clients who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness and who are experiencing serious mental illness, co-occurring disorders, or are children with serious emotional disturbance?
   a. Is this part of your intake/assessment process?
   b. Do you rely on self-report? Pull data from medical records? Collect information via case conferencing?

Coordinated Entry (10 min)

9. Are you familiar with the Coordinated Entry System? (Brief explanation for those who are not)

10. How are persons experiencing homelessness connected to the Coordinated Entry System?

11. How are referrals made into the Coordinated Entry System?

Solutions (10 mins)

12. Are you aware of solutions/models being implemented in other cities/counties that you would like to see implemented in Tuolumne?

13. What solutions should be prioritized? What are the easiest to implement? What are some bigger, longer term goals?

Appendix M
Services Currently Available to Homeless in Tuolumne County

Homeless Services in Tuolumne County

Services for Homeless Parents/Families:

Through Infant/Child Enrichment Services (ICES): Nurturing Parenting is a priority intervention, universal prevention program that is a multi-level parenting and family support strategy to prevent severe behavioral, emotional and developmental problems in children by enhancing the knowledge, skills and confidence of parents. This program is implemented by a team led by a contract provider, Infant/Child Enrichment Services (ICES) through a program called, "Raising Healthy Families". Nurturing Parenting classes are co-facilitated by TCBHD staff and are designed to help parents in stressed families including those with history of substance use disorder, child abuse and/or neglect, domestic violence and social isolation.

The Nurturing Parenting Program is an evidence-based strategy for improving parenting outcomes for families in our community.

Trauma Informed – Jamestown Family Resource Center: TCBHD contracts with the Jamestown Family Resource Center (JFRC) to provide Prevention & Early Intervention programs focusing on fostering healthy activities in a non-traditional setting. Jamestown Elementary School staff had previously implemented the evidence based practice of Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS), and the goal was to build on that program to help the school to fully implement a Trauma Informed approach in working with students and their families. Reaching out to and working with high risk students such as those experiencing homelessness, or living in the foster care system or other out-of-home placement is a primary goal.

Full Service Partnership (FSP) Program: TCBHD operates the Full Service Partnership (FSP) Program that provides comprehensive mental health services for individuals, and/or families who have been diagnosed with a serious mental illness and would benefit from intensive supports and services. FSP services are provided to children, transition age youth, adults, and older adults. TCBHD provides extensive support services to achieve recovery, wrap around case management, and rehabilitation services for participants in the program. Clients are referred from the community or from within the agency and, if they meet the eligibility criteria for the program, they are assigned to a case manager. TCBHD's Full Service Partnership Program embraces client-driven services and supports by fostering a team approach and partnership between the client, when possible the client's family, and the provider. Specific to the FSP program are a low staff to client ratio, 24/7 crisis access, and individualized services. FSP programs may assist with housing, employment, and education. In addition, mental health services and integrated treatment is provided for individuals who have a co-occurring disorder or more than one diagnosed condition. Services can be provided to individuals in their homes, the community and other field locations. FSP Peer supports are included in the wrap-around services provided. The FSP Program was designed to meet the needs of this small, rural county.

Tuolumne County Behavioral Health Benefits & Resources Specialist: TCBHD's BH Benefits and Resources Specialist assists' clients to apply for benefits, and also provides linkage and referral services to housing resources for homeless clients.

Current linkage services available for the homeless population:

The BH Benefits and Resources Specialist links homeless clients to housing resources as follows:

For those homeless who do have income:

- Clients are urged to contact ATCAA for the Rapid Re-Housing Program. The client must have a written eviction notice and/or currently be homeless to meet the criteria.
- Referral to several local landlords that have units available to rent.
- A weekly print out of newly posted available rentals and rooms for rent in the area is provided to those homeless who may have income.
- When an individual is unsheltered (i.e., awaiting opening at emergency shelter), referral is made to Salvation Army (may provide temporary motel lodging, as do some churches).
- Tents & sleeping bags can be provided through the Benefits & Resources Specialist on a "one time per year policy". (These are provided by the Salvation Army to the county for distribution as per the policy noted).

For those homeless who do NOT have income:

- Referral to local shelter through ATCAA.
- Homeless Veterans are referred to the local VA for assistance.
- Victims of domestic violence are referred to Center for a Non-Violent Community.
- Homeless individuals may be referred to the FSP Program as per the department's FSP Referral Policy. All eligibility criteria must be met to qualify. There is limited Supported Housing availability for full service partners.

Options for temporary and permanent affordable housing:

- Individuals who are homeless as a result of eviction from housing may contact ATCAA for the Rapid Re-Housing Program.
- There are currently only 3 or 4 local landlords (with multiple housing units) that work with the BH Benefits and Resource Specialist to make affordable shared independent housing available to homeless individuals.

There are very few other options for permanent affordable housing. Rents have been inflated during the past 2 years as a result of the tree mortality/infestation problem in rural foothill counties. Tree removal companies and their employees have inundated the area seeking temporary housing (one to two year terms) due to the long term projects of tree removal. Unfortunately, this has driven the cost of "affordable" housing up dramatically, making temporary or affordable housing out of the question for many in Tuolumne County.

Lambert Community Center: Lambert Community Center provides outreach and engagement resources in response to mental illness, addiction, poverty, and homelessness in Tuolumne County. Services include:

- Internet access for job search and support for applications
- Access to a Benefits Specialist by appointment
- Food available daily
- Referral to other community resources and needs
- Social and emotional support
- Faith based resourcing

Amador Tuolumne Community Action Agency Programs (Multiple Homeless Services Programs)

- ATCAA's Homeless Shelter provides emergency shelter to individuals, families, and families with children. Shelter Coordinators and staff provide case management support for job and housing searches plus referrals for a vast array of community services.
- Homelessness Prevention Program (through Central Sierra Continuum of Care) includes Coordinated Entry System (CES) Central Sierra Continuum of Care is made up of Amador, Calaveras, Mariposa and Tuolumne Counties. It meets on a monthly basis to promote a

community–wide commitment to the goal of ending homelessness; provides funding for efforts by nonprofit providers and State and local governments to quickly re-house homeless individuals and families to minimize trauma and dislocation; promotes access to and effective utilization of mainstream programs; and optimizes self-sufficiency among individuals and families experiencing homelessness.

Coordinated Entry is a consistent, community wide intake process to match people experiencing homelessness to community resources that are the best fit for their situation.

In the Central Sierra Continuum of Care Coordinated Entry system, all homeless individuals and families are eligible to apply regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, familial status, handicap, disability, actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identify, or marital status. All people calling the CA-526 CES HUB's will have fair and equal access into the Coordinated Entry System. The same assessment approach is used for all sites no matter where the client presents for services. All of the designated HUB's are ADA compliant.

There are currently four hubs in CA-526 for all homeless populations. Assessment questions are separated by singles and families for scoring and placement. The Tuolumne County HUB is operated by Amador Tuolumne Community Action Agency.
Homeless individuals being sent to or walking into the hub will receive a return date to complete their assessment. The assessment determines what type of housing is most appropriate for the client. Not all clients referred to the hub for housing are eligible for Transitional Housing, Permanent Supportive Housing, and Rapid Rehousing. Individuals who have received a community housing assessment and are deemed to be appropriate for a housing referral may not receive housing immediately or from the provider who referred them. Housing is based on availability and also on client choice.

Home Safe Housing Assistance Program – when funding is available, ATCAA offers:

- Homeless Prevention Rental Assistance
- Homeless Rapid Re-housing Assistance
  Availability and eligibility for housing and/or rental assistance can be obtained by contacting ATCAA.

Interfaith Community Social Services: Interfaith Community Social Services provides services to needy families who live in Tuolumne County. Services provided include food, clothing, house hold items, hair care, showers, job, and housing referrals. ATCAA links homeless individuals to ATCAA for housing referrals; to Tuolumne County Social Services for benefits applications; to Tuolumne County Behavioral Health for mental health and substance use services; to Mother Lode Job Training as appropriate.

Give Someone A Chance (GSAC): Provides Shower Bus and Outreach Services to homeless individuals in Tuolumne County at several service locations each week. GSAC also links homeless individuals to ATCAA for housing referrals; to Tuolumne County Food Bank for food; to Tuolumne County Social Services for benefits applications; to Tuolumne County Behavioral Health for mental health and substance use services; and to Interfaith Community Social Services for clothing, food, supplies, and housing referrals as available.

Center for a Non-Violent Community (CNVC) Emergency Shelter: The CNVC Emergency Shelter is a place of safety and healing in a confidential location. Serving women and their minor children who are fleeing domestic violence, CNVC assists with or provides:

- Transportation to help find services to meet your needs
- No charge for staying at the shelter

- Groceries provided for you and your children
- Emergency funds
- Peer Counseling
- Individual drug and alcohol counseling
- Support Groups
- Psychotherapy
- Children's program/counseling
- Life skills groups at shelter
- Assistance accessing all resources in the community

Men fleeing a domestic violence situation will be provided shelter in a different confidential location that includes the same assistance as our emergency shelter.

Homeless men/women fleeing domestic violence are referred to the CNVC Emergency Shelter.

Madera & Tuolumne Regional Salvation Army Assistance Programs: Salvation Army in Madera County is the center for administering numerous socials services and assistance programs for the low income in the region, which includes Tuolumne, Mariposa, and Mono County.

Services, funding, and resources vary by office and time of the year, however, some of what may be offered includes: free food, emergency rental assistance, shelter, and funds for paying utility bills. Referrals, case management, and self-sufficiency services may also be made available. Linkage to other Salvation Army services outside of the area, as they are available.

Appendix N
Food Pantry & Meals Availability to Homeless in Tuolumne County
2018 – Neighborhood Partner Distributions

Monday

- **St. Patrick's** – 532-7139 – **Pantry M-Thurs 9:00-4**
  116 Bradford St. Sonora, CA 95370
  - Breakfast Tues & Thurs 6:30 -8 am
    98 Jackson St. Sonora, CA 95370
- **Interfaith** – 532-0905 - **M-F 10-1pm**
  18500 Striker Ct. Sonora, CA 95370
- **Nancy's Hope** – 533-2647 – **M-Sat 10-4pm**
  1000 Technology Dr. Columbia, CA 95310

Tuesday

- **All Saints Catholic Parish** – 588-9461
  Tuesdays 10-noon
  18674 Cherokee Dr. Twain Harte, CA 95383
- **Nancy's Hope** – 533-2647 – **M-Sat 10-4pm**
  1000 Technology Dr. Columbia, CA 95310
- **Lake Don Pedro Baptist** – 852-2193 – **3rd Tuesday of each month 9-Noon. Or by appointment**
  4175 Abeto St. La Grange, CA 95329
- **Lighthouse Ministries (Red Church)** 559-5968
  Tuesday & Friday 9:30 – Noon – Dinner starts at 5pm – 6:30pm 42 Snell St. Sonora, CA 95370
- **St. Patrick's** – 532-7139 – **Pantry M-Thurs 9:00-4**
  116 Bradford St. Sonora, CA 95370
  - Breakfast Tues & Thurs 6:30 -8 am
    98 Jackson St. Sonora, CA 95370
- **Sierra Bible** – 532-1381 – **Tue-Thurs 10-11:30**
  15171 Tuolumne Rd. Sonora, CA 95370
- **Interfaith** – 532-0905 - **M-F 10-1pm**
  18500 Striker Ct. Sonora, CA 95370

Wednesday

- **Discover Life Food Pantry** – 454-0035
  Wednesdays 9-Noon
  4 S. Forest Rd. Sonora, CA 95370
- **Nancy's Hope** – 533-2647 – **M-Sat 10-4pm**
  1000 Technology Dr. Columbia, CA 95310
- **Chapel in the Pines** – 533-1755 – **2nd and 4th Wednesday 4:30 – 6pm**
  18580 Cherokee Dr. Twain Harte, CA 95383
- **Sierra Bible** – 532-1381 – **Tue-Thurs 10-11:30**
  15171 Tuolumne Rd. Sonora, CA 95370
- **Christian Heights & Heart Rock Café** – 532-7305
  Free Dinner – Dinner served @ 5:30pm
  13711 Joshua Way, Sonora, CA **or**
  1 S. Washington St. Sonora, CA 95370
- **St. Patrick's** – 532-7139 – **Pantry M-Thurs 9:00-4**
  116 Bradford St. Sonora, CA 95370
  - Breakfast Tues & Thurs 6:30 -8 am
    98 Jackson St. Sonora, CA 95370
- **Interfaith** – 532-0905 - **M-F 10-1pm**
  18500 Striker Ct. Sonora, CA 95370

2018 – Neighborhood Partner Distributions

Thursday

- **St. Patrick's** – 532-7139 – **Pantry M-Thurs 9:00-4**
  116 Bradford St. Sonora, CA 95370
  - Breakfast Tues & Thurs 6:30 -8 am
    98 Jackson St. Sonora, CA 95370
- **Sierra Bible** – 532-1381 – **Tue-Thurs 10-11:30** 15171 Tuolumne Rd. Sonora, CA 95370
- **Nancy's Hope** – 533-2647 – **M-Sat 10-4pm**
  1000 Technology Dr. Columbia, CA 95310
- **Interfaith** – 532-0905 - **M-F 10-1pm**
  18500 Striker Ct. Sonora, CA 95370
- **Jamestown Christian Fellowship** – 984-3669
  Thurs 9:30am – 12:00pm/Sundays 11:30 – 12:30
  18254 5th Ave. Jamestown, CA 95327

Friday

- **Nancy's Hope** – 533-2647 – **M-Sat 10-4pm**
  1000 Technology Dr. Columbia, CA 95310
- **Interfaith** – 532-0905 - **M-F 10-1pm**
  18500 Striker Ct. Sonora, CA 95370
- **Lighthouse Ministries (Red Church)** 559-5968
  Tuesday & Friday 9:30 – Noon – Dinner starts at 5pm – 6:30pm 42 Snell St. Sonora, CA 95370
- **Groveland EV Free Church** – 962-7584 - **Friday after the 3rd Tuesday of each month 10 – noon**
  19172 Ferretti Rd. Groveland, CA 95321

Saturday

- **Nancy's Hope** – 533-2647 – **M-Sat 10-4pm**
  1000 Technology Dr. Columbia, CA 95310
- **Christian Heights** – 532-7305 **Pantry and a meal at Community Assembly Church, in Tuolumne Saturdays 6-7:30 pm** 18785 Pine St. Tuolumne City
- **Tuolumne United Methodist** – 928-3426 or 928-1376 **Saturdays 10-11am or by appointment.**
  18851 Cedar St. Tuolumne, CA 95379

Sunday

- **Jamestown Christian Fellowship** – 984-3669
  Thurs 9:30am – 12:00pm/Sundays 11:30 – 12:30
  18254 5th Ave. Jamestown, CA 95327
- **Equipping God's People** – 770-0018
  Sundays @ Noon & by appointment
  14326 Tuolumne Rd. Sonora, CA 95370

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