

The Opportunity is Now:

Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness
6th Annual Regional Gathering

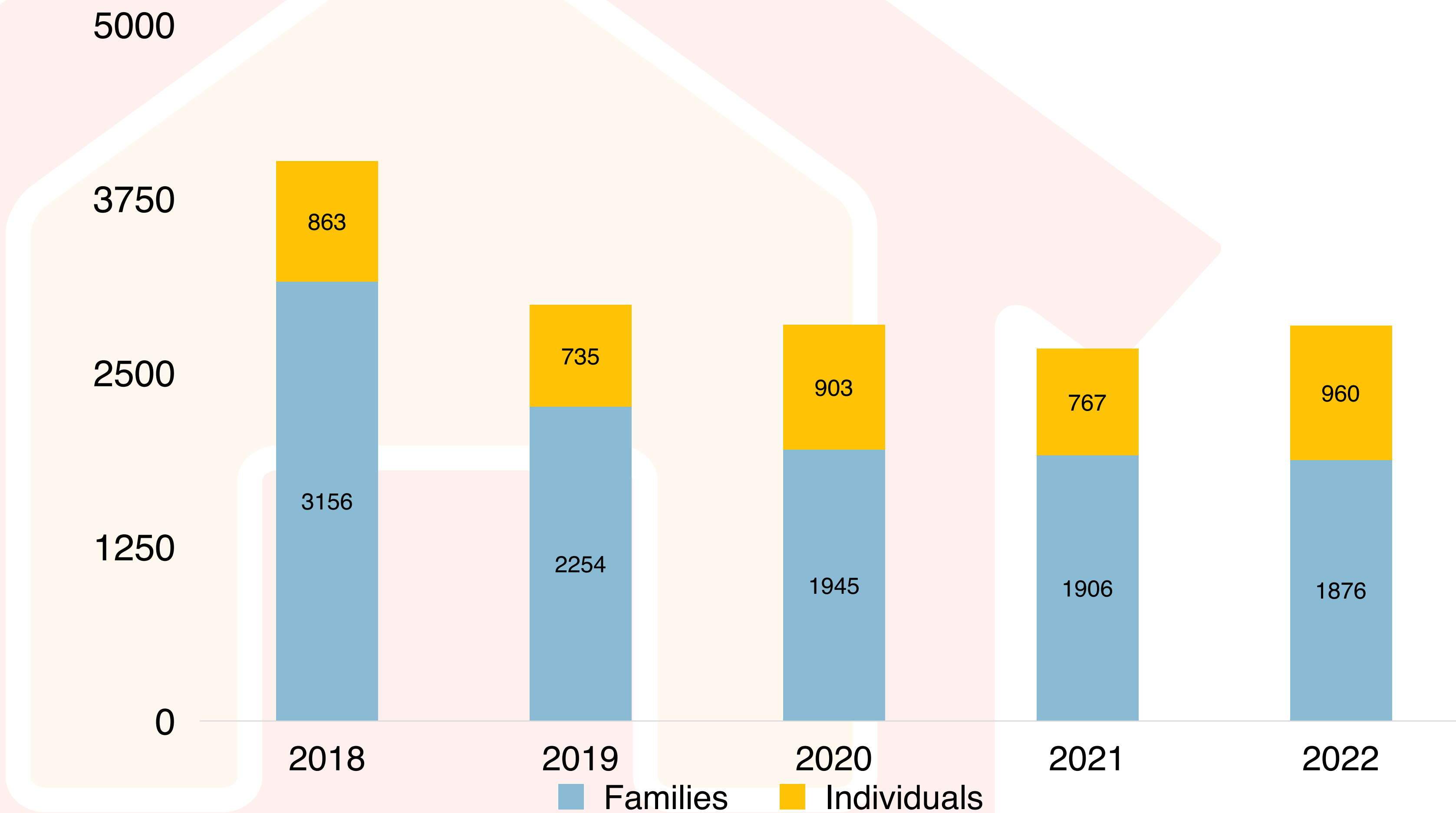
Friday, May 6, 2022

On February 23, 2022, our annual Point in Time Count identified **2,836** people experiencing homelessness in our region.

- **960 individuals**, including **68 young adults** (ages 18–24)
- **1,876 family members** (parents and children)

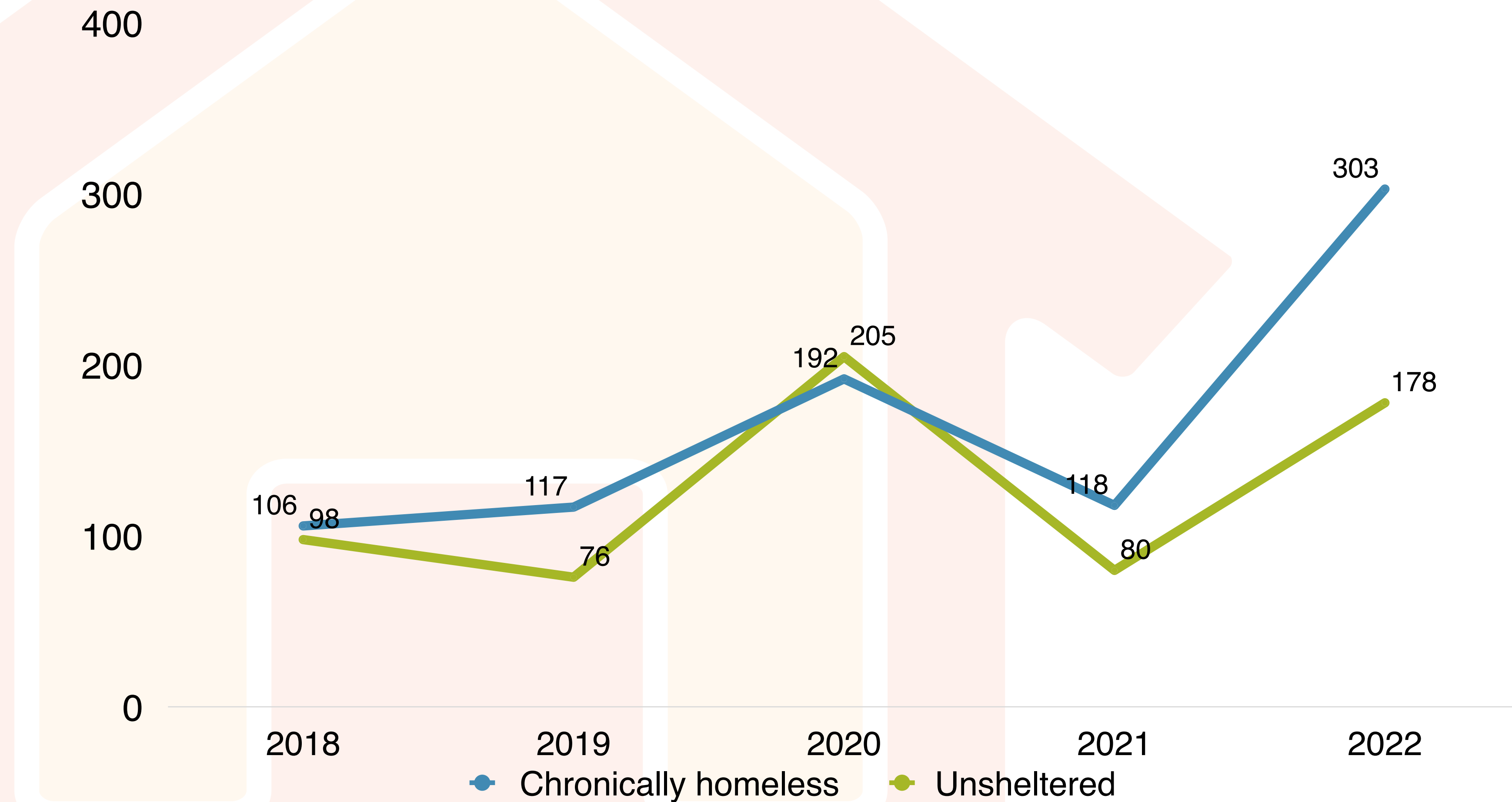
(Source: 2022 Point-in-Time Count)

Trend: Western Massachusetts Annual Homeless Counts 2018–2022



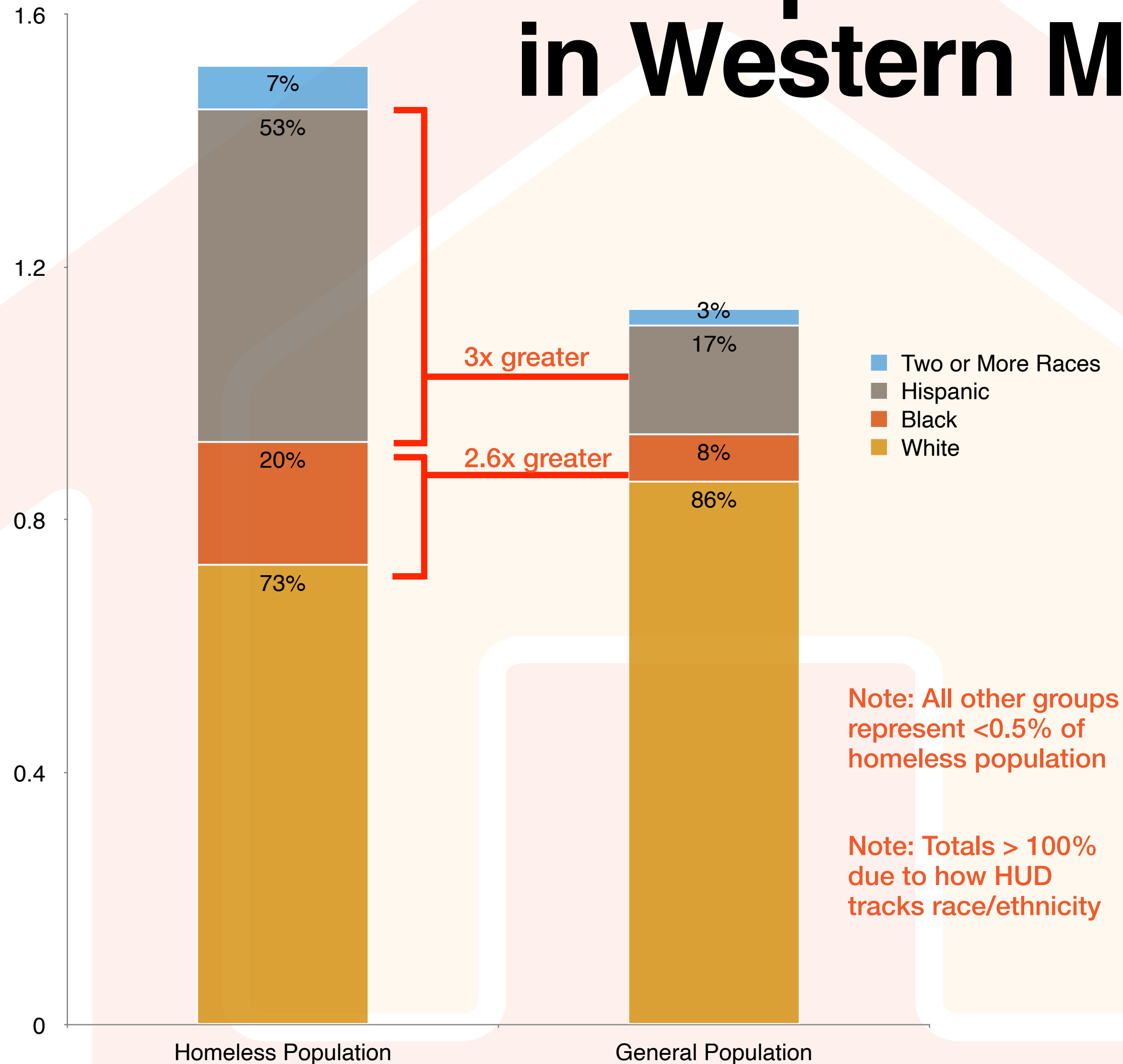
Source: HUD Point-in-Time Counts, 2018–2022

Trend: Chronically Homeless and Unsheltered 2018–2022



Source: HUD Point-in-Time Counts, 2018–2022

Racial Disparities in Homelessness in Western Massachusetts



Black homelessness = **2.6x greater** than general population numbers

Hispanic/Latino homelessness = **3x greater** than general population numbers

(Sources: 2021 Point-in-Time Count; US Census Bureau, 2019)

What the Data Tells Us

- **The pandemic continues to take a severe toll.** Risk factors increased: mental health challenges, substance use, family stress, domestic violence, job loss, plus rising housing costs.
- **Prevention works.** An unprecedented federal and state investment in eviction prevention money kept people in their homes. We need to keep investing and keep strengthening protections. The end of the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) is a significant loss for housing stability.

The Affordable Housing Gap

Western Massachusetts needs at least **17,000 more affordable rental units** to meet our population's need.

More than half of all renters in the Pioneer Valley are housing “cost burdened,” spending 30% or more of their income on housing. This trend is even worse for communities of color in the region.

Source: Great Springfield Housing Analysis, UMass Donahue Institute, Way Finders, the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts, 2021–2022

Evictions and Foreclosures: Housing Stability At Risk

Between January–April, 2022, in Western Massachusetts:

- **1,380 eviction cases filed**

Landlords are evading legal protections by filing evictions that are “no fault” while seeking back payment of rent

- **204 petitions for foreclosure and 157 scheduled foreclosure auctions**

Solutions:

- More funding for more flexible rental assistance
- Pass the COVID-19 Housing Equity Bill (S.891/H.1434)
- Pass the Right to Counsel Bill (S.874/H.1436)
- Expand the Homeowners Assistance Fund in the FY23 Budget

Our Regional Response

July 2021–April 2022

- Expanded shelter and hotel capacity from North Adams to Springfield
- Distributed over **\$83 million** in federal and state rental assistance, preserving tenancies for over **13,500** households
- Housed **672** out of homelessness, including **112** chronically homeless individuals in permanent supportive housing
- Provided housing and support services for over **600** young adults at risk of or experiencing homelessness
- Secured almost **\$1 million** for housing needs for domestic violence survivors
- Created a pipeline of **928 units** of new affordable and supportive housing

The State Response

- **\$150 million** American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds for permanent supportive housing with **\$65 million** targeted to chronically homeless individuals and families
- **\$100 million** ARPA funds for affordable housing production
- One Door: Streamlining housing development process

The FY23 Budget and ARPA Funds: Opportunities!

- Good progress in the House of Representatives' proposed budget

and:

- **URGENT: Directly invest in ERAP and/or allocate RAFT rental assistance flexibly to match ERAP guidelines; close Chapter 257 eviction protection loopholes**
- **Expand the Safe Havens program** to provide extremely challenged chronically homeless individuals the supported shelter they need to become stably housed
- **More HERE:** westernmasshousingfirst.org

The Legislation We Need Now

Bills in Joint Housing Committee:

reporting deadline May 9

- **COVID-19 Housing Equity Bill** (S.891/H.1434)
Lead Sponsors: Sen. Patricia Jehlen, Rep. Frank Moran, Rep. Kevin Honan
- **Right to Counsel in Evictions** (S.874/H.1436)
Lead Sponsors: Sen. Sal DiDomenico, Rep. David Rogers, Rep. Michael Day
- **Local Option for Housing Affordability –Transfer Fee** (S.868/H.1377)
Lead Sponsors: Sen. Jo Comerford, Rep. Michael Connolly
- **Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act (TOPA)** (S.890/H.1426)
Lead Sponsors: Sen. Patricia Jehlen, Rep. Jay Livingstone

Other key bills:

Eviction Record Sealing (HOMES) (H.4505)
Lead Sponsors: Sen. Lydia Edwards, Rep. Michael Moran

Housing Subsidy Pool for Permanent Supportive Housing (H.3838)
Lead Sponsor: Rep. Joan Meschino

And **MORE HERE:** westernmasshousingfirst.org

Network Leadership Council

THANK YOU to our Leadership Council for their steadfast partnership in the effort to prevent and end homelessness in Western Massachusetts!

ELECTED OFFICIALS

U.S. Congressman Jim McGovern,
2nd District of Massachusetts

State Senator Jo Comerford,
State Senator, Hampshire,
Franklin and Worcester

State Senator Anne Gobi,
Worcester, Hampden, Hampshire
and Middlesex

State Senator Adam Gomez,
Hampden

State Senator Adam Hinds,
Berkshire, Franklin, Hampshire
and Hampden

State Senator Eric Lesser,
1st Hampden and Hampshire

State Senator John Velis, 2nd
Hampden and Hampshire

Assistant Majority Leader
Joseph Wagner,
8th Hampden

State Representative Natalie Blais,
1st Franklin

State Representative Dan Carey,
2nd Hampshire

State Representative Mindy Domb,
3rd Hampshire

State Representative Patricia Duffy,
5th Hampden

State Representative
Tricia Farley-Bouvier,
3rd Berkshire

State Representative Michael Finn,
6th Hampden

State Representative
Carlos González,
10th Hampden

State Representative Paul Mark,
2nd Berkshire

State Representative Jake Oliveira,
7th Hampden

State Representative Kelly Pease,
4th Hampden

State Representative Smitty Pignatelli,
4th Berkshire

State Representative Angelo Puppolo,
12th Hampden

State Representative Orlando Ramos,
9th Hampden

State Representative
Lindsay Sabadosa, 1st Hampshire

State Representative
Susannah Whipps, 2nd Franklin

State Representative
Bud Williams,
11th Hampden

Mayor Joshua Garcia,
City of Holyoke

Mayor Nicole LaChapelle,
City of Easthampton

Mayor Jennifer Macksey,
City of North Adams

Mayor Michael McCabe,
City of Westfield

Mayor William Reichelt,
City of West Springfield

Mayor Domenic Sarno,
City of Springfield

Mayor Gina-Louise Sciarra,
City of Northampton

Mayor Linda Tyer,
City of Pittsfield

Mayor Roxann Wedegartner,
City of Greenfield

Manager Paul Bockelman,
Town of Amherst

Administrator Lisa Wong,
Town of South Hadley

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

MJ Adams, Director, Office of
Community and Economic
Development, City of Greenfield
Barbara Agosto, Director of Housing
and Shelter, New England Farm
Workers Council

Tanisha Arena, Executive Director,
Arise for Social Justice

Paul Bailey, Executive Director,
Springfield Partners for
Community Action

Paul Belsito, Executive Director,
Irene and George Davis Foundation

Lev Ben-Ezra, Executive Director,
Amherst Survival Center

Tom Bernard, President and CEO,
Berkshire United Way

John Bidwell, Executive Director,
United Way of the Franklin-
Hampshire Region

Alexis Breitenicher, Executive
Director, Valley Community
Development Corporation

Kathryn Buckley-Brawner, Director,
Catholic Charities, Diocese of
Springfield

Dave Christopolis, Executive
Director, Hilltown Community
Development Corporation

Christa Collier, Executive Director,
Northern Berkshire United Way

Ben Cluff, Veterans' Services
Coordinator, Massachusetts
Department of Public Health

Jessica Collins, Executive Director,
Public Health Institute of Western
Massachusetts

Steve Connor, Director, Central
Hampshire Veterans Services

David Cruise, President, MassHire
Hampden County Workforce Board

Rabbi Justin David, Congregation
B'nai Israel

Michelle Derr, Senior Vice-President,
Family Services, Community Health
Programs

Dawn DiStefano, President and
CEO, Square One

Linda Dunlavy, Executive Director,
Franklin Regional Council of
Governments

Keith Fairey, President and CEO,
Way Finders

Judge Robert Fields, Western
Division Housing Court

David Gadaire, Executive Director,
MassHire Holyoke Career Center

Maura Geary, Executive Director,
MassHire Franklin Hampshire
Career Center

Melanie Gelaznik, Executive
Director, MassHire Berkshire Career
Center

Brad Gordon, Executive Director,
Berkshire County Regional Housing
Authority

Gina Govoni, Executive Director,
Franklin County Regional Housing &
Redevelopment Authority

Michael Hagmaier, Executive Vice
President, Soldier On

Sharon Hall-Smith, Division Director,
Gandara Center

Jordan Hart, Executive Director,
Greater Holyoke Chamber

Dave Havens, Director of Homeless
Services, Mental Health Association

Clare Higgins, Executive Director,
Community Action Pioneer Valley

Dr. Richard Hopper, President,
Greenfield Community College

Stephen Huntley, Executive Director,
Valley Opportunity Council

Lori Ingraham, Assistant Treasurer,
Easthampton Savings Bank

Kathy Keeser, Executive Director,
Louison House

Kim Kelly, Director, Community
Health and Public Health Initiatives,
Berkshire Health Systems

Ellen Kennedy, President,
Berkshire Community College

Jennifer Kinsman, Senior Vice-
President Community Impact,
United Way of Pioneer Valley

Alisa Klein, Executive Director,
Grow Food Northampton

Charlie Knight, former Consumer,
Springfield

Eliza Lake, Chief Executive Officer,
Hilltown Community Health Centers

Kevin Lynn, Executive Director,
Springfield MassHire Career Center

Jose Lopez-Figuero, Director,
Center for Access Services,
Springfield Technical Community
College

Jeff Lowenstein, Director of
Community Planning, Berkshire
Community Action

Tom Matuszko, Executive Director,
Berkshire Regional Planning
Commission

Gerry McCafferty, Director,
City of Springfield Office of Housing

Deb McLaughlin, Coordinator,
Franklin County Opioid Task Force

Bill Miller, Vice-President,
Clinical and Support Options

Earl Miller, Director, Amherst
Community Responders for Equity,
Safety and Service Department

Laurie Millman, Executive Director,
Center for New Americans

Andrew Morehouse, Executive
Director, The Food Bank of
Western Massachusetts

Michael Moriarty, Executive
Director, OneHolyoke

Michelle Morris, CRA Mortgage
Loan Originator, Berkshire Bank

Theresa Nicholson, Director of
Housing Services, Center for
Human Development

Heidi Nortonsmith,
Executive Director,
Northampton Survival Center

Eileen Peltier, President, Berkshire
Housing Development Corporation

Jesus Pereira, Veterans Services
Director, City of Holyoke

Keleigh Pereira, Director,
Three County Continuum
of Care, Community Action
Pioneer Valley

Jane Ralph, Executive Director,
Construct

Phil Ringwood, Executive Director,
DIAL/SELF Youth and Community
Services

Frank Robinson, Vice President,
Public Health, Baystate Health

Kimberly Robinson, Executive
Director, Pioneer Valley Planning
Commission

Marcia Roddy, Regional Director,
Massachusetts Department of
Children and Families

Christina Royal, President,
Holyoke Community College

Jay Sacchetti, Vice President
Shelter/Housing, ServiceNet

Julie Schwager, Western
Massachusetts Area Director,
Massachusetts Department of
Mental Health

James Seney, Program Manager,
VA Central Western Massachusetts
Health Care System

James Sherbo, Senior Vice
President, PeoplesBank

Risa Silverman, Director,
Office for Public Health Practice
and Outreach, University of
Massachusetts Amherst

Mollie Sullivan, M.Ed., LMHC,
Mental Health Counselor, Mercy
Medical Center—Health Care
for the Homeless

Diana Szyal, Executive Director,
Franklin County Chamber of
Commerce

Lynette Watkins, President
and CEO, Cooley Dickinson
Health Care

Rose Webster-Smith,
Program Coordinator,
Springfield No One Leaves

Pamela Wells, Resident Services
Manager, Springfield Housing
Authority

Twjana Williams, Western
Massachusetts Regional Supervisor,
Massachusetts Department of
Housing and Community
Development

Steve Winn, President and CEO,
Behavioral Health Network

Katie Zobel, President and CEO,
Community Foundation of Western
Massachusetts

Cheryl Zoll, CEO, Tapestry Health

This list is current as of May 6, 2022.