

HOMELESSNESS IN BERKSHIRE COUNTY

2023 REPORT

Number homeless

799 people experienced homelessness in Berkshire County in 2023

Household Type	Subpopulations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● 598 individuals● 201 people in families<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ including 105 children under 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● 155 Older adults (60+)● 47 Young adults (18-24)● 249 Veterans* <p><small>*includes veterans in both Hampshire and Berkshire County</small></p>

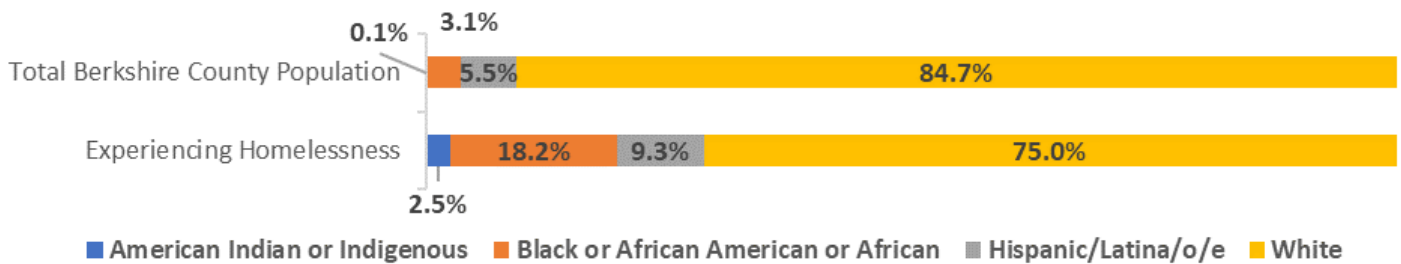
A multi-year look*

*This data is based on information reported in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) (e.g., does not include people who are living doubled up). Because racial demographics are not tracked in Office of Refugee and Immigrants' family shelters (90 people), certain groups are underreported in the demographic data for 2023. This results in an underrepresentation of the proportion of people experiencing homelessness who identify as black, hispanic or latino, or with multiple races.

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	1 Year Increase
Total # experiencing homelessness	763	619	541	532	799	50%
Individuals	738	595	499	430	598	39%
People in families	25	24	42	102	201	97%
60+	161	124	113	125	155	24%
18-24	42	26	32	31	47	52%
American Indian or Indigenous	14	12	10	14	18	29%
Black or African American	163	141	120	100	129	29%
Hispanic/Latina/o/e	64	60	52	49	71	45%
White	577	461	406	402	532	32%

The trend down and then up tracks the beginning of Covid eviction protections and resources, and the end of them.

Racial disparities



Homeless response system

Inflow: 513 people entered our homeless system for first time

Outflow: 270 people exited our system; **155** of those reported an exit to permanent housing

Preventing and ending homelessness

Since November 2022, Berkshire Housing has processed nearly **5,000 RAFT applications and provided rental assistance to 885 households. Roughly 100 households seek rental assistance every week** in Berkshire County alone.

Eviction filings are rising. Following the end of pandemic protections and funding, eviction filings in western MA have grown from 3,638 residential eviction filings in 2021 to **5,832 filings in 2023** -- a 60% increase. There were **465** filings in Berkshire County alone in 2023.

Only **3% of tenants** have lawyers in eviction cases, while **over 90% of landlords** are represented.

Housing ends homelessness. Berkshire County developers currently have **134 units of affordable rental housing** in the pipeline, including **37 units of permanent supportive housing.**

Rents have skyrocketed. Berkshire County **median rent rose 12%** over the 3-year period 2019 to 2022.