



# Homelessness Program Updates

Tina Rivera, Director, Department of Health Services

Dave Kiff, Division Director, DHS / Homelessness Services Division

Michael Gause, Ending Homelessness Manager, DHS / Homelessness Services Division



# Point in Time Count

- Requirement to receive homeless assistance funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).
- Conducted annually in Sonoma County since 2015 (no Count in 2021 due to COVID-19)
- The 2023 count occurred January 27, 2023, 5:00 AM to 10:00 AM.
- The report provides a snapshot of the number and demographics of those experiencing homelessness in the region on a given night
- It allows Sonoma County to track subpopulation trends, identify potential gaps in services, and informs future planning for homeless services

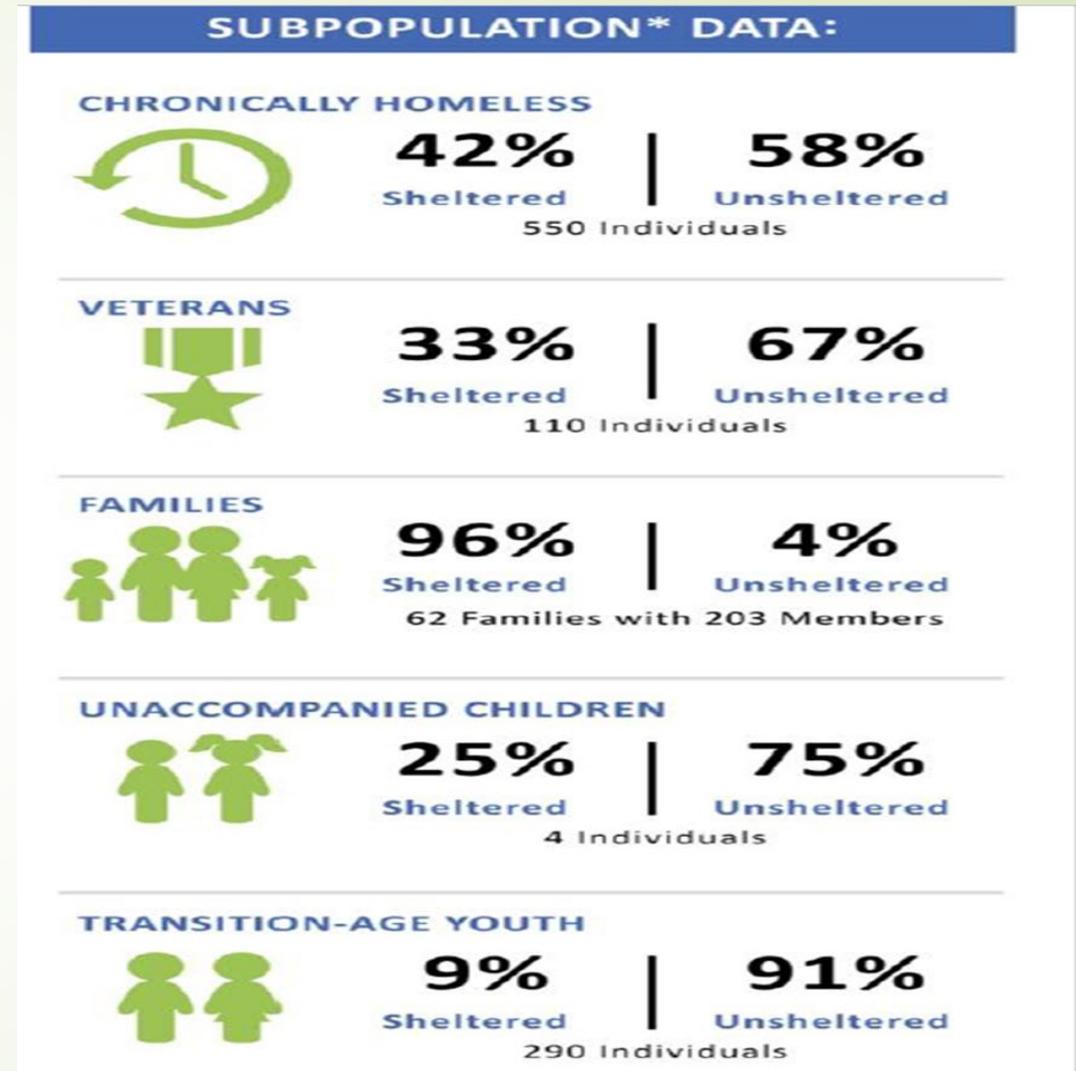
# Results

Overall, there was a 21% decrease in homelessness in 2023, the largest decrease since 2015.



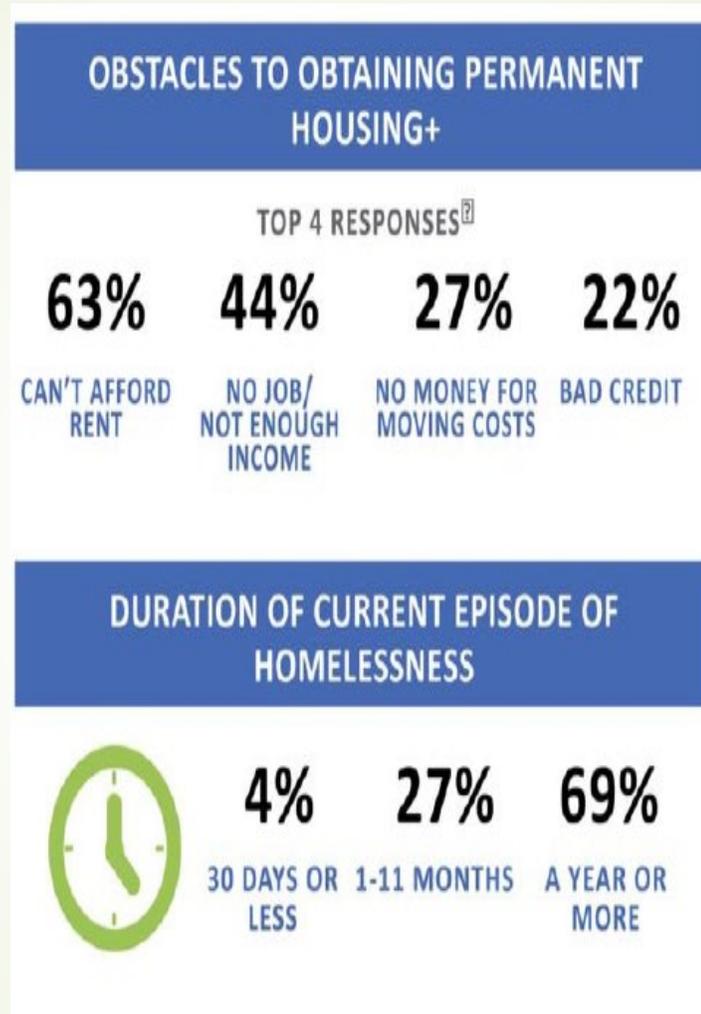
# Subpopulations

- ▶ Key subpopulations tracked by HUD include chronically homeless, families, transition age youth ages 18-24/unaccompanied youth under 18, families, and veterans.
- ▶ All subpopulations saw significant decreases aside from families which saw a very modest increase, likely due to increased shelter capacity for families



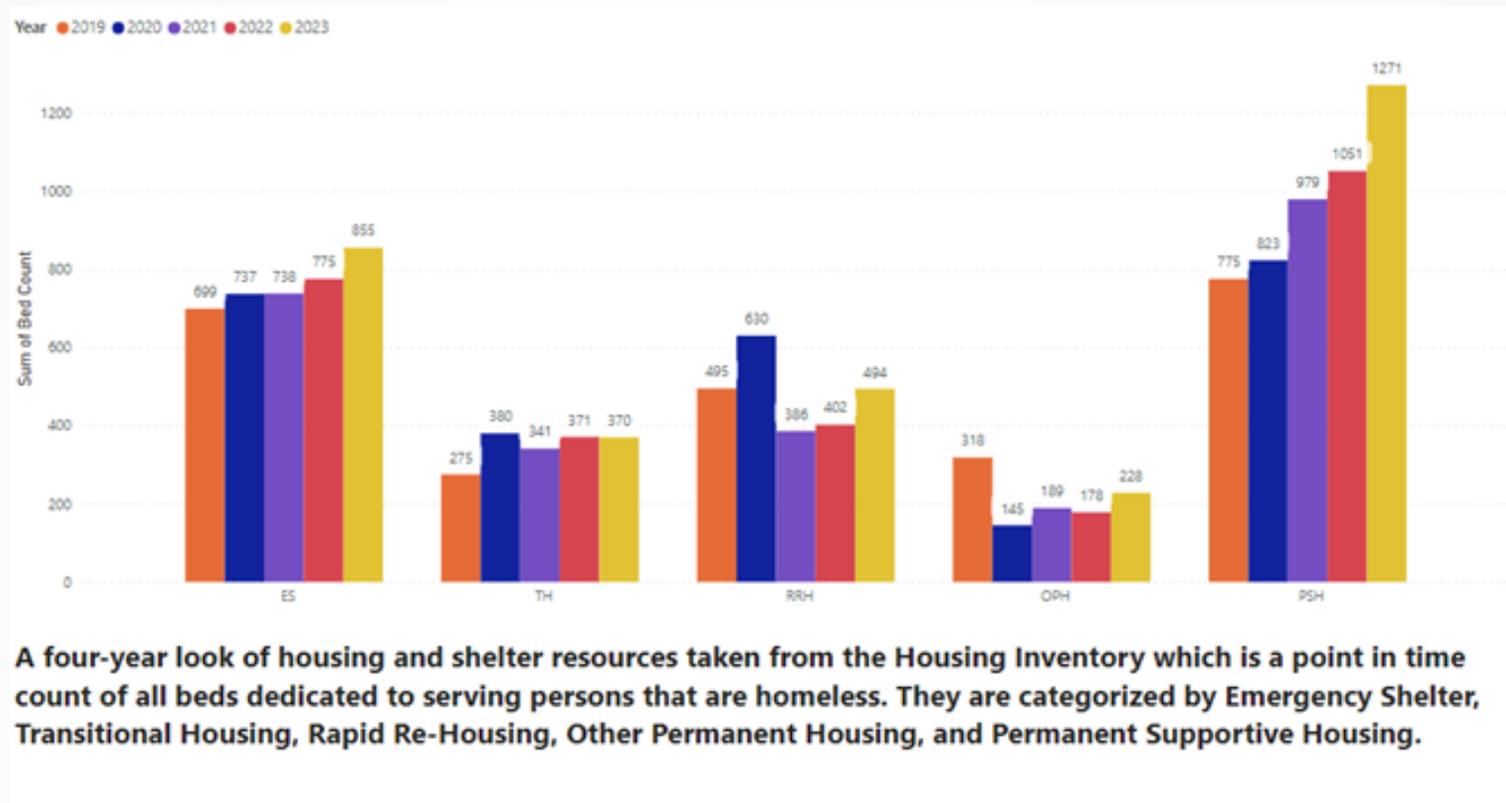
# Causes of Homelessness and Obstacles to Obtaining Housing

- ➔ The primary cause of homelessness in 2023 was the loss of a job and the primary obstacle was rent. The age at first episode of homelessness as well as duration of current episode is displayed as well.



# Jurisdictional Data (cities & unincorporated areas)

Area/Jurisdiction	Year of the PIT Count			Change from 2022 to 2023	
	2020	2022	2023	Amount	Percent
North Sonoma County	209	195	118	-77	-39%
Cloverdale	33	23	9	-14	-61%
Healdsburg	69	97	33	-64	-66%
Windsor	38	48	26	-22	-46%
Unincorporated	69	27	50	23	85%
South Sonoma County	597	768	500	-268	-35%
Cotati	37	85	15	-70	-82%
Petaluma	296	293	245	-48	-16%
Rohnert Park	248	369	210	-159	-43%
Unincorporated	16	21	30	9	43%
West Sonoma County	327	127	213	86	68%
Sebastopol	129	78	87	9	12%
Unincorporated	198	49	126	77	157%
Sonoma Valley	88	122	129	7	6%
Sonoma	61	81	40	-41	-51%
Unincorporated	27	41	89	48	117%
Santa Rosa	1,524	1,681	1,294	-387	-23%
Santa Rosa	1,461	1,658	1,160	-498	-30%
Unincorporated	63	23	134	111	483%
Undisclosed Location	-	-	12	12	N/A
<b>Totals =</b>	<b>2,745</b>	<b>2,893</b>	<b>2,266</b>	<b>-627</b>	<b>-22%</b>



Significant additions to housing supply locally (esp ES, PSH)



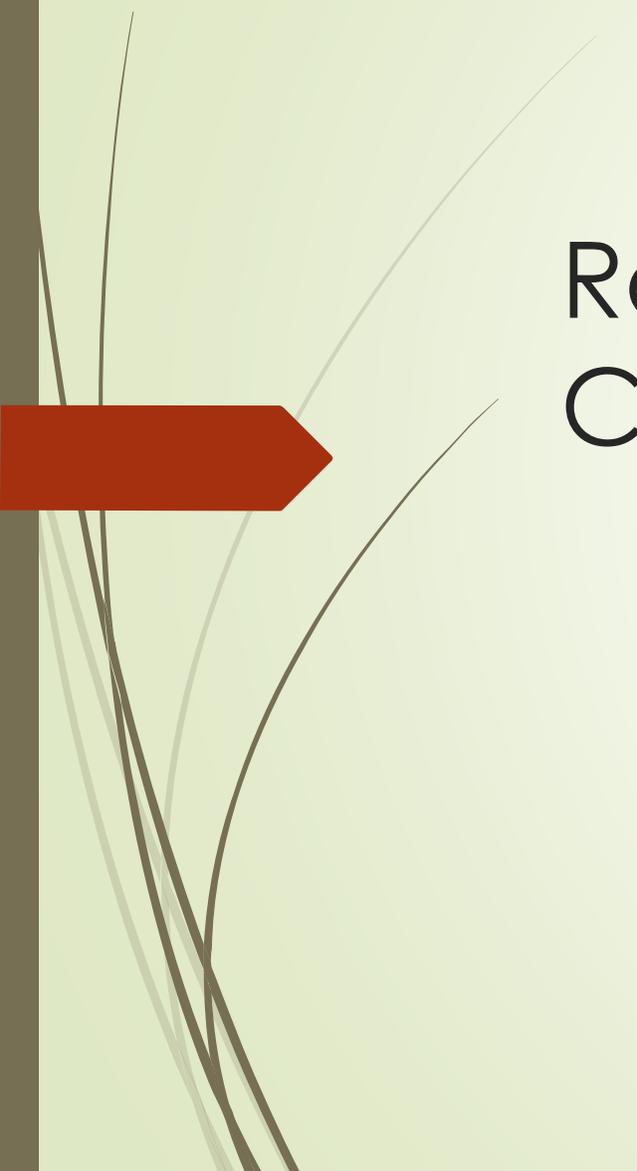
# 2023 PIT Count Takeaways

- ▶ Over 400 new beds added in past year (including shelter, rapid rehousing, and permanent supportive housing)
  - ▶ Project Homekey was critical in bringing many new beds online
- ▶ Increased coordination between CoC, County, and Cities
- ▶ Ease of impacts of COVID-19
- ▶ Still a significant ways to go to reach Functional Zero (where homeless is brief, one-time, and rare)



# Resolution to Transfer Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Contract

- ▶ Moves contract from Community Development Commission (CDC) to Department of Health Services (DHS) as New CoC Lead Agency
- ▶ Future grants will come to DHS as Lead Agency
- ▶ Includes residual ESG-Coronavirus (ESG-CV) funds from CDC to DHS



# Replacing the Beds / Closing the ESS



# Emergency Shelter Site Background

- ▶ Started late March 2023
- ▶ Goal was a six-month duration
  - ▶ SR Fire's interpretation of the Fire Code discourages longer-term use of tents as habitable structures.
  - ▶ Impacts to neighborhood, parkway, County employees, Permit Sonoma parking
  - ▶ Moving clients to housing has been challenging – group with extensive chronic homelessness (1+ year homeless with 1 or more disabling conditions)
  - ▶ Tents are not designed for long-term use.
- ▶ Over 100 persons in/out of shelter, multiple self-exits, 3 housing placements
  - ▶ Rules-based environment not for everyone
  - ▶ <5 forced exits for behavioral rule non-compliance
  - ▶ About 50-52 residents at ESS now (9-1-2023).

An aerial photograph showing a large, irregularly shaped plot of land outlined in blue. The text '2.46 acres' is overlaid in white on the plot. The plot is situated between Russell Ave to the north and a building complex to the south. A parking lot with several vehicles is visible to the west of the plot. The surrounding area includes other buildings, parking lots, and greenery.

# Recommended Alternatives

- ▶ Maintain a presence at County Campus off of Russell Avenue
  - ▶ About 2.4 acres
  - ▶ Combine a Safe Parking site for RVs and/or trailers (up to 40) and longer-duration Tiny Homes (roughly 12 or more duplexes)
  - ▶ Total = 64-74 client beds
  - ▶ RFP for vendor – look for leveraging of funds
  - ▶ Requires some pavement material TBD, water and electrical utilities
  - ▶ Assume about a 2-year duration



# Recommended Alternatives

- Change operations at Los Guilicos
  - GOAL: Pull back housing into LG Complex, longer-term infrastructure
    - Like Cal-Fire, refurbish 2 existing dorms (2 of the 4 remaining).
    - Work with Sonoma Public Infrastructure to do so.
    - Security delination for Cal-Fire
    - Total = up to 140 client beds (significant flexibility w/bunks)
    - Update / revise wildfire evacuation planning
    - RFP for Service Provider (out now)
    - Demobilize Pallet Shelter program when dorm renovations are complete, return to parking lot.



# Summary Recommended Actions

- Receive a report on the January 27, 2023, Point in Time Count in Sonoma County.
- Adopt a resolution for the transfer of current grant agreements and any amendments thereto of State of California Emergency Solutions Grants, State of California Emergency Solutions Grants-Coronavirus from the Sonoma County Community Development Commission to the Sonoma County Department of Health Services as the new Continuum of Care Lead Agency.
- Adopt a resolution authorizing budgetary adjustments to the Department of Health Services fiscal year 2023 2024 adopted budget, increasing appropriations to reflect additional revenue in the amount of \$13,740,657, transferred from the Sonoma County Community Development Commission, and additional expenditures in the amount of \$13,456,409 to support the Department of Health Services Homelessness Division, Ending Homelessness Program.
- Approve initiating the replacement of the Emergency Shelter Site at the County Campus with a Safe RV Parking and Tiny Homes at a Russell Avenue Site and improving dormitories at Los Guilicos to replace the Los Guilicos Village.